Sneak Preview!! Windows 96 What to Expect!!

JANUARY 1996

PC Computing

BULLS-EYE!!

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Top 60 Direct Vendors

Top Software Giveaways

ZD New 150MHz Pentiums • New LaserJet • New Netscape 2.0!

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Now this is clearly good news for you. And your CFO. But most importantly, perhaps, for the person who will sit in front of them all day.

You see, our XV Series of monitors, like all MultiSyne monitors, are truly designed for the eyes. The eyes of an overworked administrator, a slightly frenzied manager, a number-crunching analyst.

These eyes demand sharp detail, bright colors, and crystal-clear images. Which is precisely what these MultiSyne monitors deliver.

For example, they're built with NEC's exclusive FullScan™ capability for images that are sharp and focused all the way to the edges and in the corners.

The MultiSyne XV Series also delivers the legendary quality and reliability you expect from NEC, backed by a three year limited warranty which is one of the best in the industry. Plus, the XV Series is ideal for both PC and Macintosh® systems and offers Microsoft® Plug and Play compatibility.

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$330 ESP
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Max. Res: 1024 x 768 NI at 70 Hz

Designed for Microsoft Windows 95

*Estimated selling price. **Maximum resolutions based on horizontal and vertical frequencies only. See, Hear and Feel The Difference. Fast

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FREEZE OVER?

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Speaking of typical, everyday monitors, there's one thing you should remember: you don't have to settle for the monitor that comes bundled with the system.

In fact, these days it makes sense to be selective. For example, we've developed the NEC MultiSync XV17 to optimize today's software applications that are more involved than ever before. There's simply more information which needs to be displayed on the screen.

Our XV17 can accommodate all this on-screen information, and it does it surprisingly better than the typical monitor. Plus, a bigger screen helps eliminate constant scrolling, which can only help overall productivity. And considering all of the advantages of larger monitors, a 17" display won't be obsolete in the near future.

So if you're looking for an affordable high-performance computer monitor, we suggest the NEC MultiSync XV17, and the entire XV Series. They are designed to go above and beyond your expectations. Not your price range.

The MultiSync XV Series offers optional accessories like the AudioTower™ Speaker System shown.

To learn more, call 1-800-NEC-INFO. For information sent to you via fax, call 1-800-366-0476 and request catalog #1. Or contact us on the Internet at http://www.nec.com.

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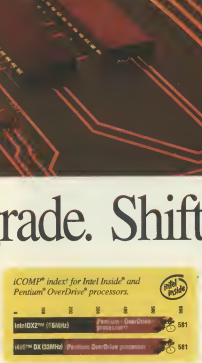

For more information, contact your local PC dealer. Or you can dial our FaxBack* number at 1-800-525-3019, doc. #8739; call 1-800-538-3373, ext. 296; or visit our Web site at http://www.intel.com/procs/ovrdrive/ to learn more.

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Hard Drive	630MB or 1GB	630MB or 1GB	630MB or 1GB	1GB
Cache Internal	16KB	16KB	16KB	16KB
Cache External	256KB (optional)	256KB (optional)	256KB	256KB
Architecture	PCI	PCI	TriFlex/PCI	TriFlex/PCI
Video Memory/Max.	1MB/2MB	1MB/2MB	1MB/2MB	1MB/2MB
Compaq 150 Color Monitor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Diskette Drive	3.5" 1.44MB	3.5" 1.44MB	3.5" 1.44MB	3.5" 1.44MB
Expansion Slots (Total)	3	3	4	5
Drive Bays (Total)	3	3	4	5
Ports: Serial/Parallel	1/1 (ECP)	1/1 (ECP)	1/1 (ECP)	1/1 (ECP)
Security Features	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Processor Upgradable	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
101-Key Keyboard, Mouse	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Software Preinstalled (Choice of)	MS-Windows® 95 or MS-Windows 3.1	MS-Windows 95 or MS-Windows 3.1	MS-Windows 95 or MS-Windows 3.1	MS-Windows 95 or MS-Windows 3.1
Energy Star Compliant	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Limited Warranty*	3-Year	3-Year	3-Year	3-Year
Price†				
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PC Computing JANUARY 1996 VOLUME 9 NUMBER 1

BULL'S-EYE

Best Buys!

Bargain Pentiums

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PCC Direct 60

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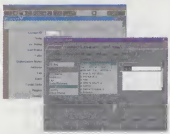
Windows 95 Databases



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90 Connectix VideoPhone Incredibly cheap videoconferencing.

92 PageScan Color, PageWiz, and PaperPort Vx Page scanners.

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96 Epson Stylus Pro

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98 HP SureStore CD-Writer 4020i CD recorder.

103 Lotus SmartSuite 96 Lotus's Windows 95 business-application suite.

108 Netscape Navigator 2.0 The best Web browser.

110 Hands-On Crush Multimedia marketing.

112 Any View Professional, Hurricane, MagnaRAM 2, and RAM Doubler

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Windows 95 Buyers' Guide

PC Computing's guide to 16 essential Windows applications and utilities for the office and home.

191 DeLorme Street Atlas USA 3.0

191 Gibson Research ChromaZone

198 Starfish Software Sidekick 95

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204 Day-Timer Organizer 2.0

212 Gold Disk Instant Multimedia

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220 Berkeley Systems Expresso

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pentium processor

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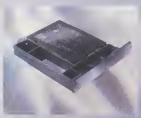

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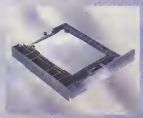

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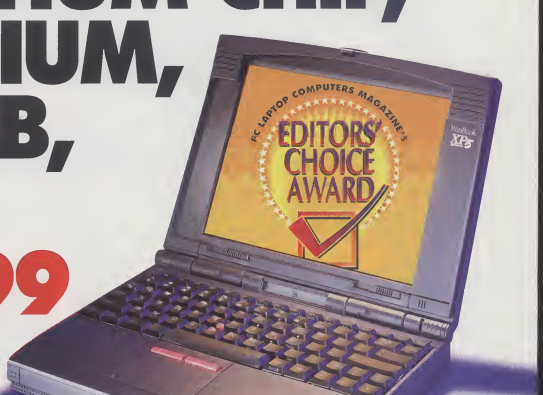

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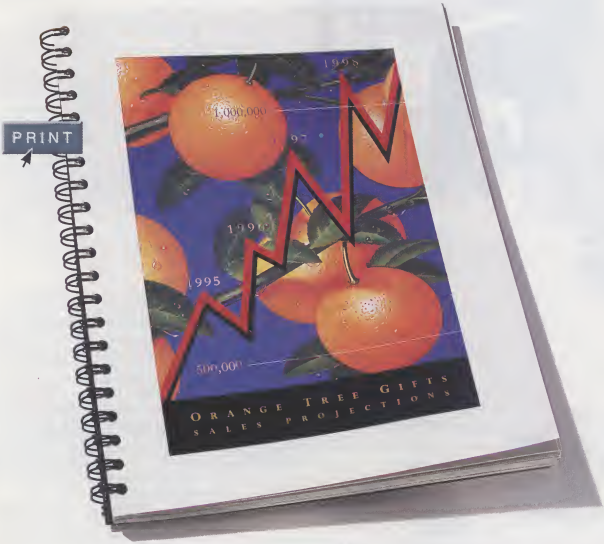

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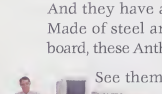

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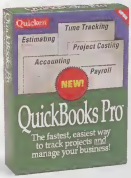

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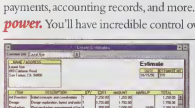

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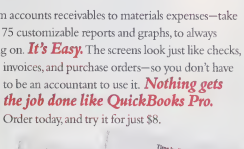

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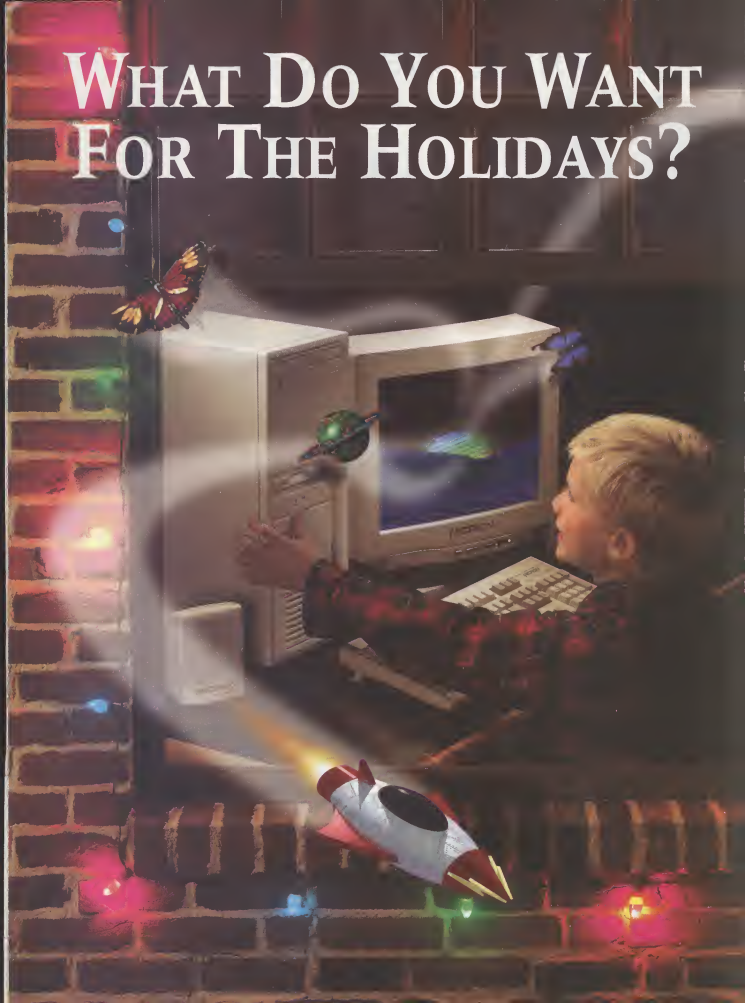

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PCC SPINS ITS WEB

Site for Sore Eyes

I've been a subscriber for a while now, and I've always enjoyed your magazine. *PC Computing* has great reviews, good coverage of operating systems like Windows 95, and terrific Web sites in the I-Way Patrol section. Now I've made it to the Internet, and I'm glad to see that your publication is there, too. Your Web site is very easy to use, and fun to explore. Keep up the good work!

RICHARD LOWE
VIA THE INTERNET

A Tangled Web

I just created Web sites for our storefront businesses. Even so, I believe that the Web can't be a viable commercial tool until it's more reliable and less congested. It's bad now, and most people and businesses have not yet established Web pages. Let's hope that Internet providers both small and large will upgrade their servers and related communications hardware soon, so that customers don't become too familiar with the message "network traffic . . . try later."

MILT BURNS
VIA AMERICA ONLINE

WE FEEL YOUR PAIN, Milt. But at what speed are you accessing the Web? Most national Internet service providers (ISPs) offer a connection at 28.8Kbps or faster, but commercial services, including America Online, have been slow to catch up. If you don't need the structured content of America Online, consider switching to an access-only ISP account. We explain in our feature "The Right Way to the I-Way" starting on page 179.

Our Secrets, Your Results

I'm the computer expert in my house. I installed Windows 95 about a month ago, and my system's performance was slower than with Windows 3.1. I didn't know what was wrong. Then I saw your October 1995 Windows 95 Superguide issue with the words *Speedup Secrets* on the cover. I bought and read the entire magazine. The next day, I reinstalled Windows 95 using your tips, and had no more problems. My CD-ROM drive is faster and more reliable than ever, my video quality is excellent, and everything else is great. Thanks!

JULIUS BAUTISTA
VALLEJO, CALIFORNIA

Review of Reviews

Congratulations on the best and most helpful reviews on Windows 95 that I have read in any magazine. Your September and October 1995 Superguide issues will stay permanently on my bookshelf, ready for the day I upgrade. I look forward to receiving your excellent magazine each month. Keep it coming!

D. H. WHEELER
DURHAM, ENGLAND

Neighborhood Net Access

I'm wondering how I can find a good local Internet service provider (ISP) that's free and supports Netscape's Navigator. Could you please give me some advice?

AARON MYERS
VIA THE INTERNET

YOU BET! Check out our feature in this issue on the best regional ISPs (page 179).

You Mastered The Intricacies Of Style Sheets, Macros, And Graphic Design.

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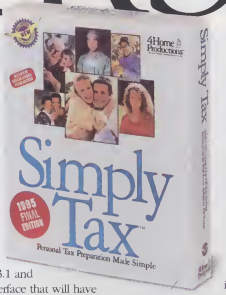

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Simply Tax is designed to run on Windows 3.1 and Windows 95 and has a friendly graphical interface that will have you up and running in minutes. An Interview Wizard offers simple explanations, and online "IRS Help" answers all your questions as you fill out your tax return. You can easily import data from last year's Simply Tax, TaxCut, TurboTax, Simply Money™ and Quicken with the click of a button. Simply Tax features over 120 forms, schedules and worksheets, and 75 mini worksheets. Plus, it supports 1040PC and all IRS electronic filing methods so you can file quickly via modem or diskette, and have your refunds deposited directly into your bank account.**

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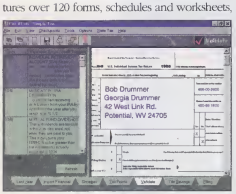

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Index/Form

Summary

Help

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Circle 265 on reader service card.

Missing Links Without Graphics

In your November 1995 issue ("Underground Internet," page 195), your advice to not load graphics ignores an unfortunate reality. Many Web-page designers embed links in the graphics. The search site Yahoo is a perfect example. Its What's New link, among others, is in the title graphic. At least Yahoo provides a text-only interface, but some Web sites don't.

CHRISTINE KRENZEL
VIA THE INTERNET

GRAPHICALLY GREEDY, ARE WE? While you won't get the benefit of image maps if you turn off graphics, the speedy access you gain can be worth it, especially if you're surfing at only 14.4Kbps. The best advice? Don't settle for anything slower than a V.34 modem (28.8Kbps). Serious surfers should consider ISDN.

Free Internet E-mail

I enjoyed your "Underground Internet" guide very much. It was packed with useful information. However, you say that CompuServe tacks a surcharge to your bill every time you receive a piece of Internet mail (page 198). As of September 10, 1995, that was no longer true.

SAMUEL BAVLI
VIA COMPUSERVE

THANKS FOR THE UPDATE. Our lead time for feature stories is three to four months. Sometimes between the time a story is written and when it hits the newsstands, information such as company rates can change.

CD-ROMs vs. VCRs

I disagree with your November 1995 "Radar" (Pulse, page 42). VCRs on the way out? Computer screens replacing television screens? Not in the next millennium. No matter how good the image quality, I can't imagine gathering the family around the old computer monitor to watch a movie. For about the cost of a large computer monitor, I can purchase a 45-inch television with built-in surround sound. And tell me, where can I rent movies on CD-ROM?

IAN MICHAELS
VIA AMERICA ONLINE

NO ONE WANTED to give up vinyl records for CDs, either. But it happened. And you're right, it's not happening today. But we're all waiting for the prices on large computer monitors to decrease, and when they do, you'll see the computer and video industries adapt quickly. Let's talk in a year.

Computer Confusion

Ed Bott speaks the truth in his response to a letter in your November 1995 issue ("Every Company Has Them," Mail, page 30). He writes, "Sadly, as our Usability Labs tests established, computers are still too hard to use." I'm tired of hearing worn-out phrases like user-friendly and intuitive. Many computers and applications are far from either. I work with newbies as well as people who've used computers for a few years, and through their example I am continually reminded of how difficult and confusing these machines can be at times.

SCOTT CLARK
VIA COMPUSERVE

Suite on Cyberjack

I agree wholeheartedly with your November 1995 review of Delrina's CommSuite 95 ("One-Click Internet, E-mail, and Fax," page 83). People wondered why Symantec bought Delrina, but if you've seen Delrina's Cyberjack Internet suite, you know that Symantec knew something the rest didn't. This software suite is actually good enough to call a must-have, and warrants passing up the ubiquitous Internet shareware. Software like this will ensure that America Online and Microsoft Network will lose out to the Internet in the long run.

TODD R. KINLEY
VIA THE INTERNET

Power to the P6

In your November 1995 issue, you compare a 133MHz Pentium with the PowerPCs from IBM and Motorola ("Power PCs: Running on NT," page 71). A more apt comparison might be between Dell's $4,000 Dimension XPS P6 and the $7,000 PowerPCs from IBM and Motorola, running 32-bit multimedia applications under Windows NT.

GERALD M. LERNER
VIA AMERICA ONLINE

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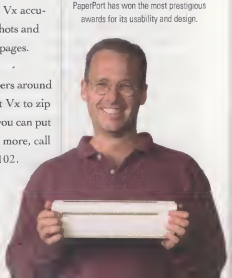

VISIONEER

PAPERPORT Vx

Circle 242 on reader service card.

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Mail BY PHONE, FAX, NET & POST:
Defending Tape Drives • Remote-Access Possibilities

Products and Press

In your November 1995 Mail (page 34), Gary Wong writes that "being light on one's feet with timely, full-featured, bug-free software releases is the secret to success." Remember that Windows 95 was promised for delivery in 1994. The gulf between the image that marketing induces and fact seems to be increasing in the computer industry. I hope that once the latest wave of hype subsides, we can reach a point where there is a clear line between the computer business and the media that covers it.

James Kurien
via the Internet

EZ to Disagree

I disagree with your review of SyQuest's EZ135 Drive in the November 1995 issue ("Storage as Easy as 1-3-5," page 76). You prefer Iomega's Zip drive, but it is slower than the EZ135 and can be used only for backup. The EZ135 can run programs. Your complaints about having to push a button and turn a lever to remove the EZ135 seem petty compared with these other issues.

Marc C. Levine
via the Internet

No Backup Support

Based on my own frustration and that of others, I realized that there are few options available for Windows 95 backup on large-capacity tape units (QIC-3020 and SCSI-DAT). I find it intolerable that Microsoft has not supported these drives, yet has provided extensive support for sound cards and other peripherals. Computer users can live without sound, but not without backup. If Microsoft intends to make any impact with Windows 95 in the SOHO and corporate world, support for these devices needs to be standard.

Brent Livingston
via the Internet

MORE PEOPLE HAVE sound cards than tape drives. And Microsoft's limited backup software concentrates on the most common tape units, which also happen to be the lowest capacity. Fortunately, other vendors like Arcada are filling the need for full Windows 95 support and comprehensive tape support for most QIC and SCSI-DAT tape units.

Remotely Yours, Windows 95

In your October 1995 Windows 95 Superguide you say that a remote TCP/IP connection to Windows 95 can't be done ("Networking Smarts," page 178). It can. I wanted to connect to NetCom using Windows 95. With the help of a dial-up FAQ on a NetCom server, I was able to set up a TCP/IP connection, and use Netscape 1.22 over that—all in less than ten minutes. Did I misinterpret your supertip? Tell me, please, because TCP/IP works great from where I sit.

Christopher DiBiagio-Wood
via America Online

SIN OF OMISSION. Let's try this one more time. What we meant was, you cannot set up your system as a Windows 95 dial-up server and use it as a gateway to the Internet (taking advantage of your T1 line, for example). Only a Windows NT server lets you transfer Internet protocol addresses over a dial-up connection.

Double Your Microsoft Money

In your October 1995 issue, you give Microsoft's Money for Windows 95 four and a half stars out of five as a usability rating ("Banking on Easy Money," page 111). However, if Microsoft wants to lure anyone away from Intuit's Quicken, it needs to work on Money's import feature. I tried importing my data the way Microsoft says to, and I got a lot of double entries when I transferred money between my accounts. My balances doubled in many cases. If only my bank account would double in real life!

Carlos D. Butler
via the Internet

MICROSOFT HAS SINCE fixed this import "prank macro" (Redmond's spin term for *bug*). For more information, surf to http://www.microsoft.com/kb/softlib/HomeZone/q_money.htm.

Windows Savings

Microsoft saved me a fortune. I upgraded to Windows 95 and have found the system to be completely reliable and virtually crashproof. The speed gain over Windows for Workgroups 3.11 is minute, but I have

When Other Techies Have Questions, They Usually Call You.

more resources available. Plus, there is no need to get memory managers or disk compressors. Thanks, Microsoft!

CHARLES D. BURLESON
VIA COMPUSERVE

Name That Site

In your November 1995 A-List (page 54), you mention that Netscape's Navigator can be downloaded from ftp.mcom.com. This is Netscape's old site name, from when Netscape was Mosaic Communications. This address no longer works. You'll do better with ftp.netscape.com.

STEVE FRIEDL
VIA THE INTERNET

TAKE YOUR PICK. You can download Netscape's Navigator from mcom.com, netscape.com, or any of a dozen other sites. The challenge, however, isn't finding an open site, it's getting past the online busy signal that plagues FTP sites for popular products such as Navigator. But keep trying—it's worth it.

CD-ROMs Get Faster

CD-ROM drives now come in eight-speed models, and most home PCs come with at least a quad-speed drive. But software developers are still making double-speed CD-ROMs. Wake up, CD makers. Catch up with the outside world!

C. C. CHU
VIA THE INTERNET

THE OUTSIDE WORLD is a big place. Quad-speed drives are common in home systems today, but many users still rely on last year's double-speed models. Manufacturers must cater to their whole market. Sure, you have to wait for that video clip, but if it were mastered at quad-speed, many people wouldn't see it at all.

Moving or Copying?

In your November 1995 excerpt from the book *CD-MOM 95: The Mother of All Windows 95 Books*, by Barry Simon and Woody Leonhard (Addison-Wesley, 1995) the "Just Do the Right Drag" Snapshot on page 270 shows an icon with a plus sign for Drag and Move. This is incorrect. When you copy a file you see the plus sign, and when you move a file you see nothing. The "Drag and Move" and the "Drag and Copy" pictures should be switched.

CHRIS WHITEFORD
VIA COMPUSERVE

For the Record

In "Win95 App Explosion" (November 1995), the table "Will Your Windows 3.x Apps Work with Windows 95?" on page 132 should have listed Novell's WordPerfect 6.1 and PerfectOffice 3.0 as being compatible with Windows 95.

HOW SOON DO YOU PLAN TO UPGRADE TO A NEW SYSTEM AND WHY? Send your thoughts about this and other subjects to Mail, *PC Computing*, 950 Tower Lane, 19th Floor, Foster City, CA 94404; fax: (415) 578-7059; Internet: 72241.1724@compuserve.com; CompuServe: 72241,1724. Letters are subject to editing for length and clarity.

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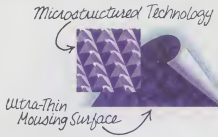

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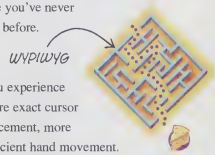

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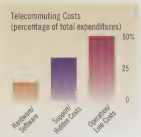
Pulse Windows 96, NEC's

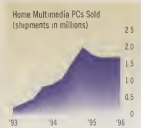


SOURCE: INFONETICS RESEARCH

Remotely Expensive: Most U.S. businesses spend an average of $1.6 million per year on remote workers. Surprisingly, equipment costs are the smallest expense.

SOURCE: COMPUTER INTELLIGENCE INFOCORP

The Pentium Is Falling! Prices for PCs are steadily dropping. The average cost of a new Pentium-based system is now $2,000.



SOURCE: DATAQUEST

Multimedia Slows: After a 400 percent growth rate over the last two and a half years, demand for home multimedia systems is slipping.

SNEAK PREVIEW

Microsoft's New Baby

It's 1996 and Windows 95 is four months old. But don't bet on Microsoft's baby being around to celebrate its first birthday. It's a good operating system, but there's just one little problem: Its name has expired. The birthday party is more likely to be a christening for Windows 96.

Big surprise, right? You've been waiting for the other shoe to drop since the August release. And if you're a computer-services director, you've probably banned Windows 95 from your corporate desktops and servers until you hear the second thud. PC Data President Ann Stephens reports that while individuals have been plunking down about $33 million a week for Windows 95, corporations have stayed away.

"It's not that anything is seriously wrong with Windows 95," adds Forrester Research analyst Jon Oltsik. "It's just that upgrading corporate equipment is such a major hassle that information-technology executives want to do it only once."

Bill's Vision: Expected by summer, Windows 96 should include bug fixes, driver updates, and new utilities.

"No one expects Windows 96 to be a major overhaul," says Stephens. "Just a point revision—as in Windows 95.1."

When will Windows 96 arrive? Probably within the first half of this year—although, as always, it's futile to predict the release date of a Microsoft product. Code is with beta testers, but the job won't be anywhere near as onerous as testing Windows 95 says Carter Lusher, vice president and research director of the Gartner Group. He thinks Windows 96 could arrive as early as April.

As of press time, Microsoft wouldn't say much except that Windows 96 is code-named Nashville (Chicago and Memphis were taken). Most analysts and beta testers are looking for transient bug fixes and fine tuning wrapped around minor feature improvements. Expect Windows 96 to include a few features that didn't make the Windows 95 release deadline, such as infrared data-transfer

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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY PETER ALAN GOULD

Bargain 4x4 CD-ROM

support and add-ons for ISDN. Support for a NetWare 4.1 Requester should appeal to corporate buyers, while Microsoft hopes that its DirectX multimedia extensions will make Windows 96 the 3-D game platform of choice. Look for improvements in the Exchange e-mail client and the Internet Explorer Web browser, as well as improved support for peripheral and software drivers.

Microsoft hasn't announced its upgrade policy yet, but analysts expect either minimal fees or no charge for an upgrade from Windows 95. Whether Windows 96 enjoys a longer run than Windows 95 depends on how early in the year it makes its debut. One thing's for sure, it's a guaranteed hit. **MH**

Stac Bugs Windows 95

If you're upgrading to Windows 95 and use the compression utility Stacker 4.0, upgrade to Stacker 4.1 first, or you could lose data. Stacker 4.0's disk optimizer wipes out Windows 95 file and directory names. Once Windows 95 is installed, the only way to "un-Stack" your drive is with an undocumented fix using two different DOS utilities.

The alternative is to spend $30 for Stacker 4.1, which has the single improvement of Windows 95 compatibility.

Stac Electronics first warned customers of this problem during Windows 95's debut, and followed up by sending postcards to recently registered users. But the company is recommending Stack 4.0 users who inadvertently installed Windows 95 to seek help from Stac's online forums or Web site (http://www.stac.com). **MH**

No More CD Juggling

Now that most applications and games are available on CD-ROM, a new problem has cropped up: **CD swapping.** NEC Technologies' **MultiSpin 4x4 CD-ROM Changer** is an internal quad-speed drive that **holds up to four CDs** at a time and costs only $279. The internal drive takes up no more space than a regular drive does, and uses an **elevator-like mechanism** to store and exchange CDs. **JOC**

MultiSpin 4x4 CD-ROM Changer / NEC Technologies / (800) 632-4636 / $279 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 605*

Color Scanners

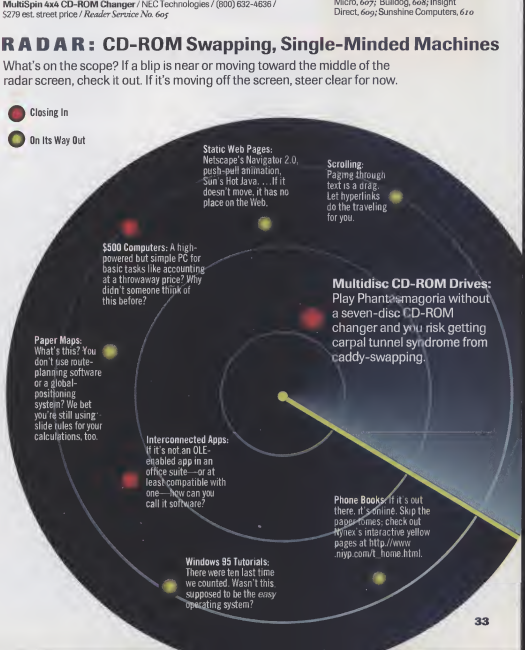
You view and print in color, so why scan in grayscale? Color scanner prices are dropping. Here are the least-expensive color flatbed scanners we could find as of October 23, 1995.

Product	Price
Microtek Color ScanMaker II *Computer Discount Warehouse (800) 886-4239*	$396
Genius Color Page 1 Pro *MidWest Micro (800) 413-9757*	$415
Microtek ScanMaker IISP *Bulldog Computer (800) 438-6039*	$469
Microtek ScanMaker IIHR *Insight Direct (800) 998-8021*	$579
Hewlett-Packard ScanJet 4C *Sunshine Computers (800) 854-7754*	$899

Reader Service Numbers: Computer Discount Warehouse, *606*; MidWest Micro, *607*; Bulldog, *608*; Insight Direct, *609*; Sunshine Computers, *610*

RADAR: CD-ROM Swapping, Single-Minded Machines

What's on the scope? If a blip is near or moving toward the middle of the radar screen, check it out. If it's moving off the screen, steer clear for now.



A New Spin on 17-Inch Displays

Get a new perspective on Windows: High-resolution, 17-inch monitors from ADI and Portrait Display Labs let you switch between vertical and horizontal views by rotating the bezel on the monitor. Check out the full-page portrait view for word processing and page layout, then switch to the landscape view for a wide-angle look at spreadsheets.

To pivot ADI's MicroScan 17X (shown above) or PDL's Pivot 1700, turn the bezel on the monitor and hit a hotkey combination on your keyboard. The view then switches to a vertical or horizontal orientation. The video drivers that come with each monitor handle the switch. Both monitors work with most major graphics cards, support a maximum resolution of 1,280 by 1,024, and include digital controls. The MicroScan 17X's dot pitch is a respectable 0.28mm; the Pivot 1700's is a finer 0.26mm.

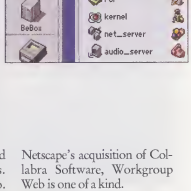
What does this extra twist cost? Less than you'd expect. At $1,099 for the Pivot 1700 and $959 for the MicroScan 17X, both are priced to compete with 17-inch displays that can't make the switch. **JOC**

Pivot 1700 / Portrait Display Labs / (800) 858-7744 / $1,099 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 611*

MicroScan 17X / ADI Systems / (800) 228-0530 / $959 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 612*

The Next NeXT?

What if you built a technologically superior computer and no one wrote any apps for it? This question, which puzzled Steve Jobs at NeXT, is now being faced by Jean-Louis Gassée, another former Apple executive. His company, Be, recently announced the **BeBox.** This machine sports **dual 66MHz PowerPC chips** and an **object-oriented** operating system. It's as fast as high-powered PCs, but sells for only $1,600. The BeBox is aptly named: **It's just a box.** You provide the monitor, drives, and other peripherals. Gassée hopes to lure developers by marketing it as the **ultimate tool** for writing programs that exploit the merging of the Web and multimedia. **RS**



BeBox / Be / (415) 462-4141 / $1,600 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 613*

WORKGROUP FORUM

Groupware on the Web

Want the benefits of Lotus Notes without the hassles? Digital's Workgroup Web Forum lets you share and collaborate with teammates across the office or around the world. While Lotus wisely offers Notes users the option to publish databases on the Web via Internotes Web Publisher, companies that don't need Notes' additional features will find Workgroup Web alluring.

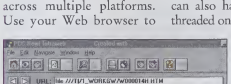
Workgroup Web marks the ascension of corporate *intrawebs,* or internal Web-based networks. Intrawebs are simple to implement, easy to support, and accessible across multiple platforms. Use your Web browser to link into an intraweb and view local hyperlinked files. It's as easy as surfing the Web.

Intrawebs can deliver hot company news, daily messages, agendas, and meeting schedules. Many companies have set up intrawebs for human-resources information and help-desk support. Why publish a phone-book–size policy manual or directory when it's quickly outdated and unused? Instead, post it on an intraweb where it can easily be edited on the spot.

Use Workgroup Web to share working drafts of memos, manuscripts, slide presentations, and spreadsheets. You can also have automatically threaded online conversations, share audio and video files, and conduct polls in real time. Essentially, any information that can be published on the Web can be organized, shared, and managed with Workgroup Web. And until something comes out of Netscape's acquisition of Collabra Software, Workgroup Web is one of a kind.

On the flip side, Workgroup Web doesn't compete with Notes' unrivaled workflow management, database replication, and forms creation. But if you don't need all these features, you won't miss the high cost, long implementation schedules, and tough learning curves associated with Notes.

At $1,995 for a server and $99 for each client, Workgroup Web Forum is a smart alternative for companies that don't need all the features of Notes. And for simple setup and implementation, Workgroup Web is unbeatable. You be the judge: Look for an example of our intraweb at http://www.zdnet.com/~pccomp. **RS**

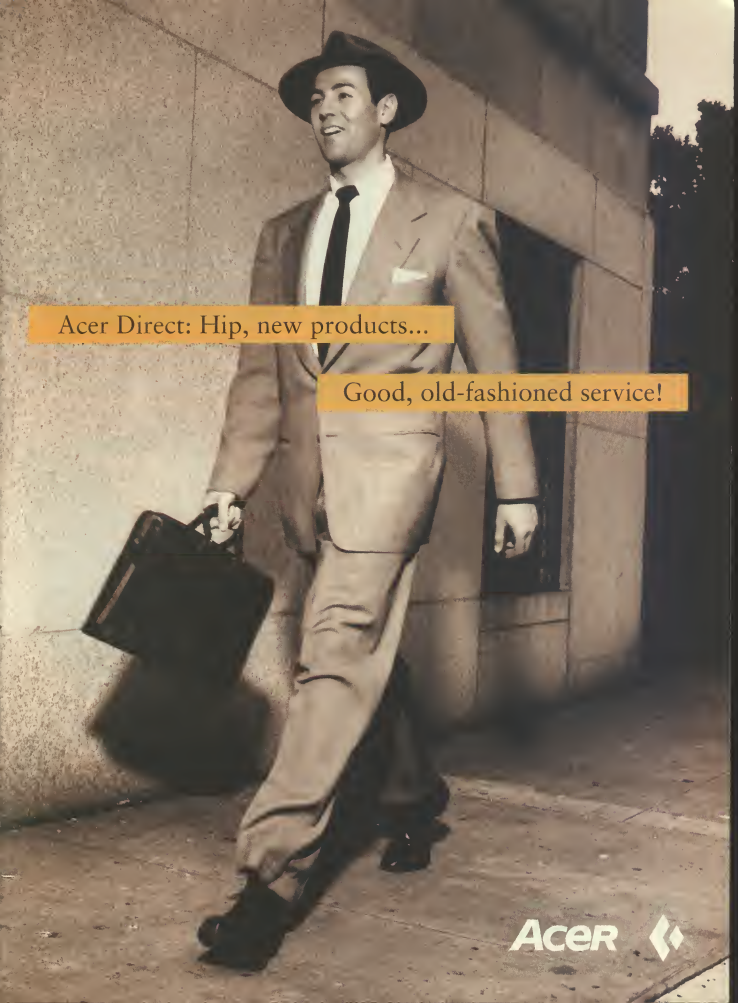


Intraweb: Don't need the power of Lotus Notes? Share basic workgroup information via any browser using Digital's Workgroup Web Forum.

Workgroup Web Forum / Digital Equipment Corp. / (800) 344-4825 / $1,995 est. street price for the server, $99 for each client / *Reader Service No. 614*

Contributors to Pulse: KYLA K. CARLSON, JAMES OLIVER CURY, MIKE HOGAN, JACK LYON, SCOTT NAYLOR, RICH SCHWERIN, *and* JON ZILBER. *Edited by* WENDY TAYLOR.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TOSELIO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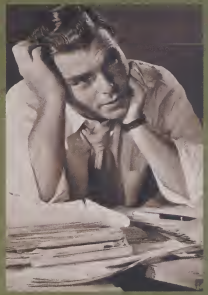

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The A-List

Editors' Top Picks by Wendy Taylor

		Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats *	More Info
Systems	High-Performance Pentium	Micron Electronics P133 Millennia	**Want to see Windows scream? Want to see it again?**	$3,598, 133MHz Pentium, 16MB RAM, 1.2GB, 6X CD-ROM.	Sept. 1995, page 106 (800) 515-9197 Reader Service No. 857
	High-Performance Pentium Pro	Hewlett-Packard Vectra XU 6/150	**RISC power in an x86-based system. Feed it native 32-bit apps only.**	$5,700, 150MHz Pentium Pro, 32MB RAM, 2GB hard drive.	This issue, page 84 (800) 752-0900 Reader Service No. 858
	Desktop Workhorse	Micron Electronics P120 Millennia	**A trim minitower design and enough power to keep even wireheads happy.**	$2,699, 120MHz Pentium, 16MB RAM, 1.2GB hard drive.	Sept. 1995, page 106 (800) 515-9197 Reader Service No. 859
	Low-Cost Desktop PC	Dell Dimension P75t	**First-rate features at a cut-rate price—our favorite combo.**	$2,029, 75MHz Pentium, 16MB RAM, 1GB, 4X CD-ROM.	Stay tuned (800) 765-8431 Reader Service No. 860
	Soho System	Compaq Presario CDS 982	**Command central for any home office—manages your fax, voice, and e-mail messages while you get down to work.**	$2,199, 90MHz Pentium, 16MB RAM, 729MB hard drive.	Nov. 1995, page 503 (800) 888-5858 Reader Service No. 861
	High-Performance Workstation	IBM Power Series 850	**Workstation might meets Pentium prices in this PowerPC rocket.**	$6,796, 133MHz PowerPC 604, 32MB RAM, 1GB hard drive.	Nov. 1995, page 71 (800) 472-7693 Reader Service No 862
	Pricewise Direct System	Polywell Poly 500P8	**The most PC at a bargain price—we checked.**	$2,848, 133MHz Pentium, 16MB RAM, 4X CD-ROM drive.	This issue, page 132 (800) 999-1278 Reader Service No. 863
Network Servers	[illegible]	Compaq ProSignia 300 5/90	**Who needs an information systems department? This server is so well designed, it runs itself.**	$5,434, 90MHz Pentium, 32MB RAM, 2GB hard drive.	Nov. 1995, page 138 (800) 345-1518 Reader Service No 864
	[illegible]	Digital Prioris LX 590	**Our labs called it the fastest server to hit our test bench; we call it a great deal.**	$4,418, 90MHz Pentium, 198MB RAM, 4X CD-ROM drive.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 344-4825 Reader Service No 865
	[illegible]	Compaq ProLiant 1500	**A reliable anchor for 15 or more nodes.**	$16,212, 100MHz Pentium, 128MB RAM, two 2.1GB SCSI-2 drives.	Nov. 1995, page 138 (800) 345-1518 Reader Service No. 866
	[illegible]	Hewlett-Packard NetServer 5/100 LH	**Room for two processors and loaded with technical wizardry.**	$14,758, 100MHz Pentium, 192MB RAM, four 1GB SCSI drives.	Nov. 1995, page 140 (800) 322-4772 Reader Service No. 867
Portables	Portable Desktop Replacement	Toshiba Satellite Pro 410CDT	**Big desktop power—but take only what you need on the road.**	$4,699, 90MHz Pentium, 8MB RAM, 4X CD-ROM drive.	This issue, page 94 (800) 999-4273 Reader Service No. 868
	Lightweight Traveling Notebook	IBM ThinkPad 701C	**George Jetson would be envious; the butterfly keyboard spreads its wings when you open the case.**	$2,999, 50MHz 486DX2, 8MB RAM, 540MB hard drive.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 426-7255 Reader Service No. 869
	Low-Cost Color Portable	Texas Instruments Extensa Model 450	**All the extras of Dell's Latitude and Toshiba's Satellite for hundreds less. Let the price wars begin!**	$1,799, 75MHz 486DX4, 4MB RAM, 340MB hard drive.	Dec. 1995, page 92 (800) 848-3927 Reader Service No. 870
	Multimedia Notebook	Gateway 2000 Solo S90	**Big, high-resolution screen; removable CD-ROM drive; and wired for sound.**	$5,799, 90MHz Pentium, 16MB RAM, 1.2GB hard drive.	Nov. 1995, page 74 (800) 846-2025 Reader Service No 871
	State-of-the-art Portable	IBM ThinkPad 760CD	**When you demand the ultimate: full-screen hardware MPEG and a high-resolution 12.1-inch display.**	$7,999, 120MHz Pentium, removable CD-ROM drive.	Nov. 1995, page 66 (800) 426-7255 Reader Service No. 877

*ESTIMATED STREET PRICE.

The A-List Editors' Top Picks by Wendy Taylor

		Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats*	More Info
Desktop Printers	Desktop Laser Printer	Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 5MP	**You can buy a faster laser, but not a better one. Plus, who needs cables? Beam jobs to the IR port instead.**	$800, 6 ppm, 600 dpi, PCL 5 (PostScript optional), infrared port.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 752-0900 Reader Service No. 873
	Low-Cost Color Printer	Canon BJC-4100	**Low-maintenance, high-quality color—and priced for mortals.**	$349, 720-by-360-dpi black, 360-by-360-dpi color.	Dec. 1995, page 88 (800) 848-4123 Reader Service No. 874
	Desktop Color Printer	Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 855C	**Near-laser-quality color output for a tenth of the price.**	$499, 600 dpi, 7 ppm black, 3 ppm color.	Stay tuned (800) 752-0900 Reader Service No. 875
	Portable Printer	Citizen PN60	**Slip it in your briefcase, then wow clients when you produce color pages on the spot.**	$339, 300-dpi thermal transfer, 1.5 pounds.	Feb. 1995, page 64 (310) 453-0614 Reader Service No. 876
Network Printers	[illegible]	Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 5Si MX	**Even 50-page print jobs fly out faster than you can trot down the hall to claim them.**	$4,299, 24 ppm, 600 dpi, PCL 5e, PostScript Level 2.	This issue, page 89 (800) 752-0900 Reader Service No. 877
	[illegible]	Tektronix Phaser 340	**Drop-dead solid-ink color at just 11 cents per page.**	$4,995, 4 ppm, 600-by-300-dpi black and color.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 835-6100, ext. 1229 Reader Service No. 878
	[illegible]	Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 1600C	**Churns out brilliant color pages faster than you can produce them.**	$1,400, 9 ppm black, 4 ppm color.	Stay tuned (800) 752-0900 Reader Service No. 879
Video	High-Resolution 20- or 21-Inch Monitor	Nanao FlexScan T2-20	**It's like buying orchestra seats for Windows—and worth every penny.**	$2,163, 20-inch, 1,600 by 1,200 pixels, Plug and Play.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 800-5202 Reader Service No. 880
	High-Resolution 17-Inch Monitor	Sony Multiscan 17sf	**Sweet 17-inch deal. Looks great, too.**	$899, 1,280 by 1,024 pixels at 60Hz.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 352-7669 Reader Service No. 881
	High-Resolution Graphics Accelerator	Matrox MGA Millennium	**Ultrafast Windows RAM and 3-D acceleration make this the graphics accelerator to covet.**	$480, 4MB WRAM, 1,280 by 1,024 pixels at 76Hz, PCI interface.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 583-4353 Reader Service No. 882
Storage	Removable Storage	Iomega Zip drive	**Chic, purple, and portable. Plus, the cartridges are removable.**	$200, 25MB or 100MB cartridges, SCSI or parallel interface.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 697-8833 Reader Service No. 883
	CD-ROM Drive	NEC MultiSpin 4Xc	**The best bargain around: Queue up seven discs in this quad-speed jukebox for the price of a single-disc drive.**	$349, SCSI interface, seven-disc changer.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 632-4636 Reader Service No. 884
	Hard Drive	Seagate Medalist 2140	**Be greedy. At these prices, why not get two?**	$530, Fast ATA-2, 10.5ms access time, 2.51GB storage.	Stay tuned (800) 468-3472 Reader Service No. 885
	Network Storage	Mega Drive Systems MR5 Raid Disk Array	**The best kind of insurance for your network data.**	$12,745, 5GB RAID array.	Nov. 1995, page 186 (800) 404-6342 Reader Service No. 886
Peripherals	Personal Scanner	Visioneer PaperPort Vx	**The quickest way to tame your paper in-box—moves paper off your desk and onto your hard drive.**	$359, 400-dpi scanner, document-management software.	This issue, page 92 (800) 787-7007, ext. 100 Reader Service No. 887
	Multimedia Sound Card	Creative Labs Sound Blaster AWE32 PnP	**The ultimate for business multimedia. Great for games, too.**	$249, 32-voice polyphony, 16-bit DSP.	This issue, page 173 (800) 998-5227 Reader Service No. 888
	High-speed Fax Modem	U.S. Robotics Courier I-modem	**The best of both worlds—a 28.8Kbps analog and ISDN modem in one.**	$699, ISDN and V.34 (28.8Kbps).	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 877-2677 Reader Service No. 889

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The Mouse That Roars.

RRRRoar!

Now your mouse roars with the power of personal control over all your travel.
Introducing United Connection.℠

Reserve flights on over 500 airlines, book rooms from over 30,000 hotels, rent cars from over 50 companies worldwide, and find low airfares in a click. That's power.

Welcome To United Connection.℠

Now your PC's mouse roars with a power it never knew before. Because now it gives you complete control over all your travel, thanks to the employee-owners of United. With United Connection℠ software, you can reserve and purchase your travel right from your own PC.

Flights & Fares. Tell us where you're going and you'll see all the available flights that meet your itinerary–from over 500 airlines. Make your selections and the best available fares pop up on the screen. You can even check for current United arrival and departure gates and times.

Check Ins & Outs. Specify your destination and you'll see what's available at over 30,000 hotels. Now that's room service!

Wheels & Deals. You can reserve a car from over 50 car rental companies worldwide. Just point, click…and pull away.

FareShopper.℠ Whenever price is your priority, we'll show you a list of the best available fares for your itinerary.

Your Personal Profile. Once you enter all your travel preferences – aisle seat, smoke-free hotel rooms, phone-equipped cars, etc. – United Connection remembers every detail. Time after time.

Connecting Colleagues. Who's going along? List their preferences and United Connection will provide the best rates and fares available for the whole group.

Mileage Plus.® United Connection gives you instant access to your Mileage Plus account, including your current balance and recent activity. You'll earn 500 Mileage Plus bonus miles every time you use United Connection software to buy and complete round-trip travel on United from now through 1996.

All in all, your mouse now gives you more power over your travel experience than you ever thought possible.

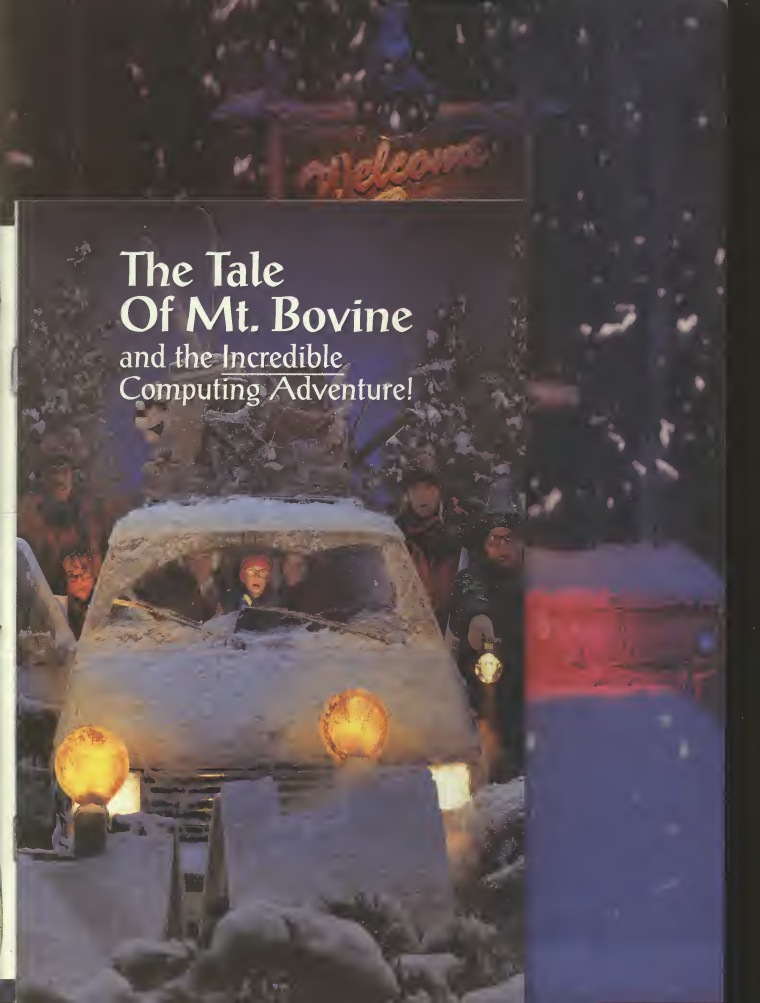
Call 1-800-4UA-CNXN (482-2696) to get connected.

UNITED CONNECTION™

The A-List Editors' Top Picks by Wendy Taylor

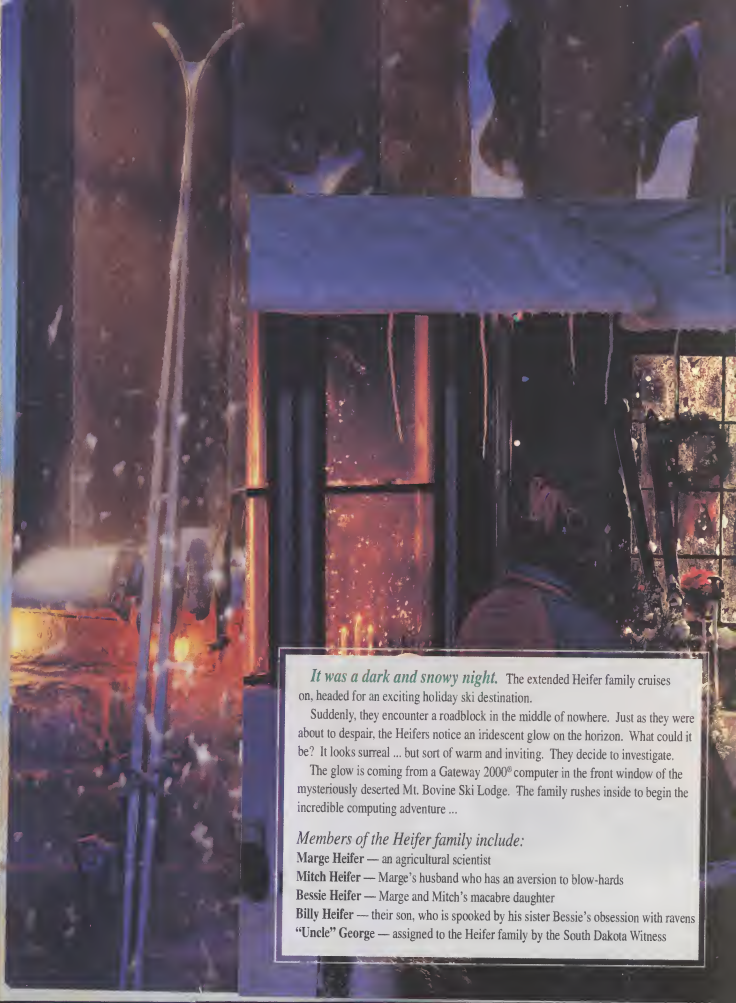
		Top Pick	The Buzz	The Stats *	More Info
Desktop Applications	Software Suite	Microsoft Office for Windows 95	**The complete business software suite for Windows 95.**	$499 (Standard Edition), 28MB to B9MB hard disk space.	Sept. 1995, page 83 (800) 426-9400 Reader Service No. 890
	Word Processor	Lotus Word Pro 96	**Microsoft's Word comes close, but smart spell-checking and versioning control give Word Pro 96 an edge.**	$105, Windows 95 or Windows NT 3.51, BMB RAM.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 343-5414 Reader Service No. 891
	Spreadsheet	Microsoft Excel for Windows 95	**While QuattroPro and Lotus 1-2-3 languish in the 16-bit world, Excel steals the 32-bit show.**	$339, Windows 95 or Windows NT 3.51, BMB RAM.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 426-9400 Reader Service No. 892
	Database	Microsoft Access 95	**The usability and productivity champ.**	$339, 486 CPU, 12MB RAM.	This issue, page 162 (800) 426-9400 Reader Service No. 893
Graphics Applications	[illegible]	Lotus Freelance Graphics for Windows 95	**Reason enough to upgrade to Windows 95. Great for flashy multimedia presentations.**	$329 ($99 upgrade), Windows 95, 18MB to 40MB hard disk space.	Sept. 1995, page 94 (800) 343-5414 Reader Service No. 894
	[illegible]	Microsoft Publisher for Windows 95	**The people's press and the usability champ.**	$80, 3B6 CPU, 6MB RAM, 6MB hard disk space.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 426-9400 Reader Service No. 895
	[illegible]	QuarkXPress 3.31 for Windows	**Produces pages as slick as the ones in your hands. PageMaker shops should check out PageMaker for Windows 95.**	$570, 4B6 CPU, BMB RAM, 12MB to 15MB hard disk space.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 788-7835 Reader Service No. 896
	[illegible]	CorelDraw 6	**The all-in-one graphics toolkit for Windows 95: Draw, edit, and design your own masterpieces.**	$487, Windows 95, 4B6 CPU, BMB RAM.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 495-6216 Reader Service No. 897
	[illegible]	Adobe Photoshop 3.0 for Windows	**A digital darkroom for your PC. And a Windows 95 version is expected early next year.**	$550, 4B6 CPU, BMB RAM, 20MB hard disk space.	Nov. 1994, page 106 (800) 521-1976 Reader Service No. 898
Finance	Personal Finance	Intuit Quicken Deluxe 4 for Windows	**Branch-office checking from your hard drive.**	$39, 3B6 CPU, 4MB RAM, 7MB hard disk space.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 624-8742 Reader Service No. 899
	Business Accounting	Intuit QuickBooks Pro	**Cheaper than your average accountant and a lot easier to understand.**	$189, 3B6 CPU, 4MB RAM, 12MB hard disk space.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 624-8742 Reader Service No. 900
Communications	Fax-Communications Software	Delrina CommSuite 95	**One launchpad for all your Internet fixes. Sends e-mail and faxes, too.**	$99, 4B6 CPU, BMB RAM, 30M8 hard disk space.	Nov. 1995, page 83 (800) 268-6082 Reader Service No. 768
	Web Browser	Netscape Navigator 2.0	**Still the best way to explore the Web. Download the new Windows 95 version from ftp://ftp.netscape.com.**	$39, Windows 95, 4MB RAM, Internet access.	This issue, page 108 (800) 638-7483 Reader Service No. 769
Organization Tools	Personal Information Manager	Lotus Organizer 2.0	**The interface is a little precious—but the networking and usability extras are first-rate.**	$119, Windows 3.1, 3B6 CPU, 8MB hard disk space.	Feb. 1995, page 118 (800) 343-5414 Reader Service No. 770
	Project Manager	Microsoft Project for Windows 95	**Takes the work out of teamwork—the easy way.**	$469, Windows 95, 3B6 CPU, 20MB hard disk space.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 426-9400 Reader Service No. 771
	System Utility	Symantec Norton Utilities for Windows 95	**Resuscitates dead files and diagnoses hardware problems before they happen. Everyone should have a copy.**	$90, Windows 95, 486 CPU, 8M8 RAM.	Dec. 1995, page 158 (800) 441-7234 Reader Service No. 772
	Reference	PhoneDisc PowerFinder	**Let your fingers do the walking—find phone numbers fast. Just in: the updated version for 1996.**	$99, Windows 3.1, 3B6 CPU, 4MB RAM, CD-ROM.	Stay tuned (800) 284-8353 Reader Service No. 773

*ESTIMATED STREET PRICE



The Tale Of Mt. Bovine

and the Incredible Computing Adventure!



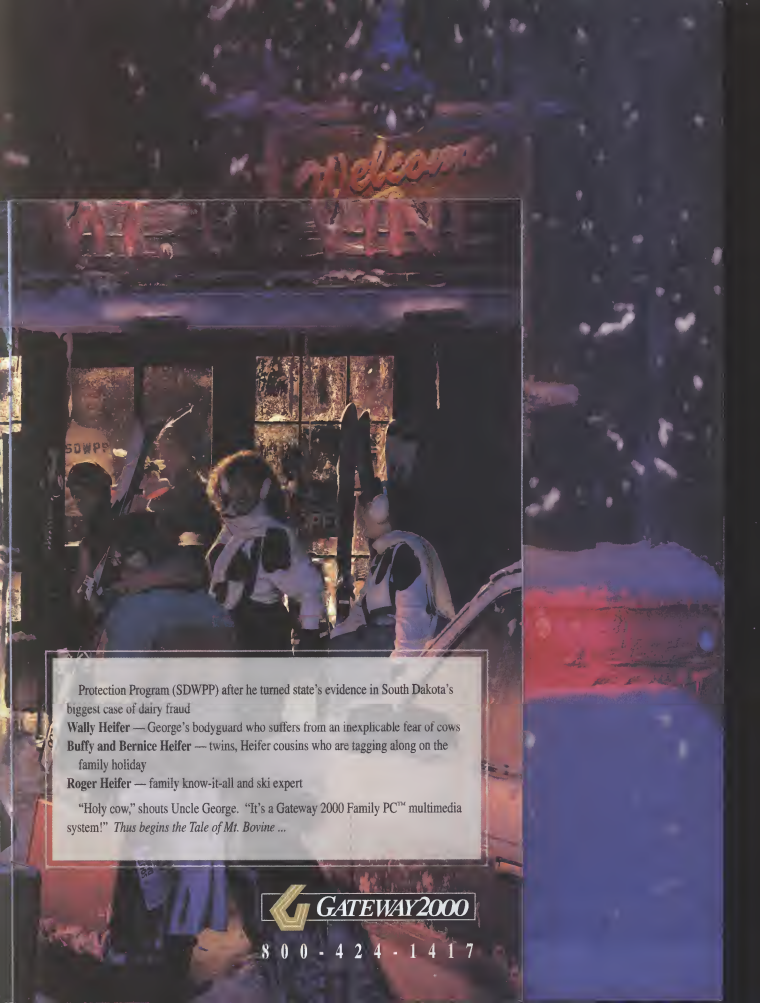
It was a dark and snowy night. The extended Heifer family cruises on, headed for an exciting holiday ski destination.

Suddenly, they encounter a roadblock in the middle of nowhere. Just as they were about to despair, the Heifers notice an iridescent glow on the horizon. What could it be? It looks surreal ... but sort of warm and inviting. They decide to investigate.

The glow is coming from a Gateway 2000® computer in the front window of the mysteriously deserted Mt. Bovine Ski Lodge. The family rushes inside to begin the incredible computing adventure ...

Members of the Heifer family include:

Marge Heifer — an agricultural scientist
Mitch Heifer — Marge's husband who has an aversion to blow-hards
Bessie Heifer — Marge and Mitch's macabre daughter
Billy Heifer — their son, who is spooked by his sister Bessie's obsession with ravens
"Uncle" George — assigned to the Heifer family by the South Dakota Witness



Protection Program (SDWPP) after he turned state's evidence in South Dakota's biggest case of dairy fraud

Wally Heifer — George's bodyguard who suffers from an inexplicable fear of cows

Buffy and Bernice Heifer — twins, Heifer cousins who are tagging along on the family holiday

Roger Heifer — family know-it-all and ski expert

"Holy cow," shouts Uncle George. "It's a Gateway 2000 Family PC™ multimedia system!" *Thus begins the Tale of Mt. Bovine ...*

GATEWAY2000

800-424-1417

MASTER
GATEWAY 2000

"Wally, I'm happy as all get-out with this Gateway computer. Go out there and ski with your family. Anyway, there's no one here to recognize me," says Uncle George, busy at the keyboard the next morning. "And Wally ... quit whining about cows. I'm telling you, it's gotta be a theme resort, man. Just because it's called Mt. Bovine doesn't mean there's an Abominable Snow Cow herd out there." But George can't convince him. So Wally stays in with George, who is totally entranced by the **Gateway 2000® P5-100 Family PC™ multimedia system** standard with MPEG technology, and priced at only $2,149 — an unbeatable value!

New MPEG Technology For Movie-Quality Video

All Gateway 2000 Family PC multimedia systems now come standard with new MPEG (Motion Picture Experts Group) data compression technology for movie-like video performance. MPEG gives you incomparable full-screen, full-motion video right from your CD-ROM drive! Combined with the video scaler on all Gateway graphics cards (standard on our Family PC systems), moving pictures from all your MPEG multimedia applications will be smoother — no herky-jerky moving images here! And it won't be long until all your favorite flicks will be available on CD.

"Wally, get a load of this! In Gateway's Generations II software collection is Masters® Golf," exclaims George. "Check out all this live-action video and interviews with cool pros like Bobby Jones. I can't believe the video. It's just like being there! And Wally, I called the friendly folks at Gateway, and they say there are more MPEG-ready applications coming soon!"

850MB Hard Drives Minimum On All Gateway PCs

Get the hard drive space you'll need to store today's and tomorrow's intensive software applications. Gateway 2000 introduces a new minimum standard — hard drives from 850MB to 2GB on all Gateway desktop PCs! Even with all the incredible pre-installed software on your Gateway system, you'll know that you still have plenty of room to go. These hard drives support DMA Mode 1 or 2, providing you with the best performance for multitasking environments like Windows® 95.

George can't believe his good fortune in discovering the Gateway P5-100 Family PC system complete with MPEG technology. Meanwhile on Udder Trails, Buffy and Bernice think it's just plain rude for Uncle George and Wally to be so antisocial.

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Inseparable as always, the twins Buffy and Bernice head out to the moguls on Cud Pass. "I can't believe George and Wally are at that computer already this morning," pouts Bernice. "They are *so* ... hey Buffy, where is that incredibly cool music coming from? No way! Buff, that *computer* is pumping out those tunes!" So the twins spend their day with the **Gateway 2000® Holiday XL system**, while Mt. Bovine's entertainment, Disco Santa, lip synchs along to the high-fidelity sound.

Stereo Speaker Sound For The Audiophile At Heart

You'll be in awe when you hear the amazing stereo sound of Gateway's Altec™ Lansing ACS-40 speakers now standard on all Gateway Family PC™ multimedia systems! Exclusively from Gateway 2000, these high-quality speakers are a step above any other standard speaker set in the industry.

Add our Altec Lansing ACS-250 subwoofer for only $75. Your speaker system will pump out an additional 40 watts of thumping bass on all your software applications and music CDs with this heart-pounding subwoofer.

Experience the full-bodied sound of a home stereo system with Altec Lansing ACS-400 speakers. These 1-foot-tall tower speakers include the ACS-250 subwoofer and Dolby® Pro-Logic Surround Sound for the epitome of stereo sound on all your multimedia applications and music CDs. The ACS-400s are available exclusively through Gateway 2000 as an upgrade from the ACS-40 speakers for just $120.

6X EIDE CD-ROM Drive For Super-Fast Performance

Be ready for tomorrow's technology with this lightning-fast 6X CD-ROM drive. It's the fastest EIDE CD-ROM found anywhere with 900KB/second data transfer rate and 214ms average access time. Combine the 6X CD-ROM with any Gateway

graphics accelerator standard on our Family PC systems, and you'll get full-motion video and be set for video scaling applications including MPEG and video conferencing.

"Bernice, I'm just blown away by the stereo sound of Gateway's Holiday XL speakers!" exclaims Buffy. "And I can't believe how cool and helpful those Gateway tech support people were today. Boy, I wish *we* knew that much about computers! Check out this Music Central™ 96 software application running on our really fast 6X CD-ROM." Meanwhile, back on Bull Run, Marge is anxious to try the business applications on one of those Gateway 2000 PCs, known for their high quality and value.

800-424-1417

On a break from Bull Run, Marge and the kids, Billy and Bessie, are thrilled to find a **Gateway P5-120 Family PC™ multimedia system**. And Marge sees visions of the perfect holiday ahead with all the software applications available from Gateway.

Microsoft Windows 95 At Your Service

All Gateway 2000® PCs include Microsoft® Windows® 95 and are optimized to take full advantage of this new operating system! You'll be prepared to weather all the computing storms of tomorrow with the powerful 32-bit platform of Windows 95.

Gateway's New Generations II Software Collection

You'll get 45 of the newest, most popular software programs in the world with Gateway's new Generations II software collection, pre-installed on all Gateway Family

Featured with optional 17" CrystalScan monitor.

PC multimedia systems. Most Generations II programs are optimized for Windows 95, bringing new life to your multimedia software. And don't forget to ask about Gateway's Ultimate Software Bundle — unrivaled in the world of software bundles!

Takin' Care Of Business With MS Office 95, Professional Edition

Gateway's Holiday XL configuration, and our P5-100, P5-120, and P5-133 Professional systems all include Microsoft Office 95, Professional Edition, with 32-bit versions of MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint® presentation graphics program, Schedule+, Access database and Bookshelf® '95. These feature-rich applications provide innovative tools and resources to take advantage of Windows 95, for the ultimate computing performance.

"Mom, dig this!" exclaims Billy, experiencing the full multimedia fun of NHL® Hockey '95, available in the Gateway Sports Pack. Marge smiles, but can hardly wait to explore MS Office 95. While back on Herding Road, Mitch is sick of Roger's free-advice, King-Of-The-Hill attitude ... looks around and ... "Whoa, what the heck's going on at Mt. Bovine? Marge? ... kids? Hey Rog, I'll be right back, buddy."

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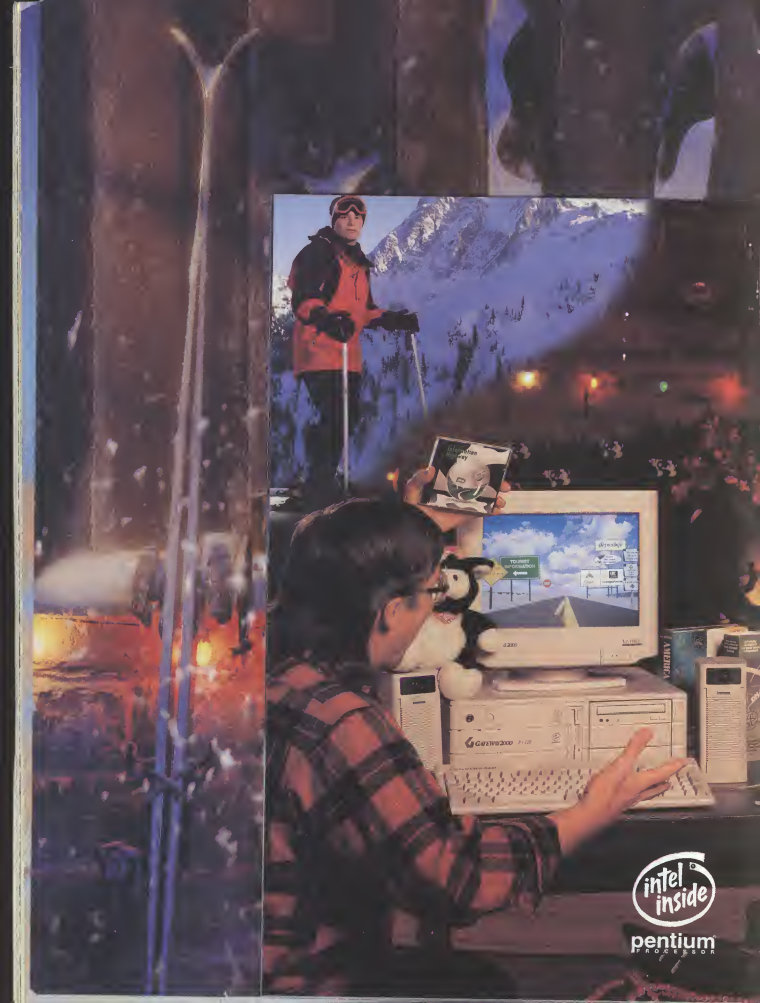
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pentium
PROCESSOR

"Know-it-all, big ski expert Roger," mutters Mitch as he enters the warm glow of Mt. Bovine lodge, "I've been itching to get in here with these computers for days anyway!" With that, Mitch stumbles into Mt. Bovine and almost lands right on a **Gateway 2000® P5-120 Family PC™ multimedia system** where he discovers a whole new world on the information superhighway!

Introducing The Gateway 2000 Information Highway CD

When you get a Gateway 2000 PC with fax/modem, your universe erupts with more information and communication capabilities at your fingertips than you ever thought possible! And we'll include our own Gateway 2000 Information Highway CD to make navigation around this new universe easy. The Information Highway CD features a cool user interface with point-and-click icons that lead you through trial memberships to CompuServe® Prodigy® America Online® and Reuters Money Network online services. You'll also get GNN (Global Network Navigator®) for easy Internet browsing and FaxWorks™ communication software on the Information Highway CD.

Explore the entertainment world, access live chat lines and meet people from all over the globe, or converse with old friends and family! Reference early releases of publications such as *USA Today*, *People* and *BusinessWeek*. And get hooked into UseNet groups where people sharing common interests meet online for world-wide conversations and to exchange information. Access areas where you can download a million files of all types — free of charge! And for the world's most expert online technical support assistance, you can contact the Gateway 2000 BBS.

To get an edge on Roger, Mitch enters the ESPN site and talks to ski pros about all the latest slalom tips. But he's sidetracked and finds evidence that Uncle George donated his dairy heist money to the research of high-nutrition milk production. "Oh, just wait till I tell Marge! She's been wondering who gave her that anonymous grant money! And now that I'm online, there's nothin' stopping me from taking over as family know-it-all. See ya' Rog!"

Meanwhile Roger readies himself for Holstein Hill, Mt. Bovine's most treacherous downhill slope. He poises, glances around to make sure everyone's looking and ... "Hey! Where did they all go?! What *are* they doing? How could those Gateway computers possibly be more entertaining or informative than *me*? I'd better head back to Mt. Bovine to check out my competition!"

GATEWAY 2000

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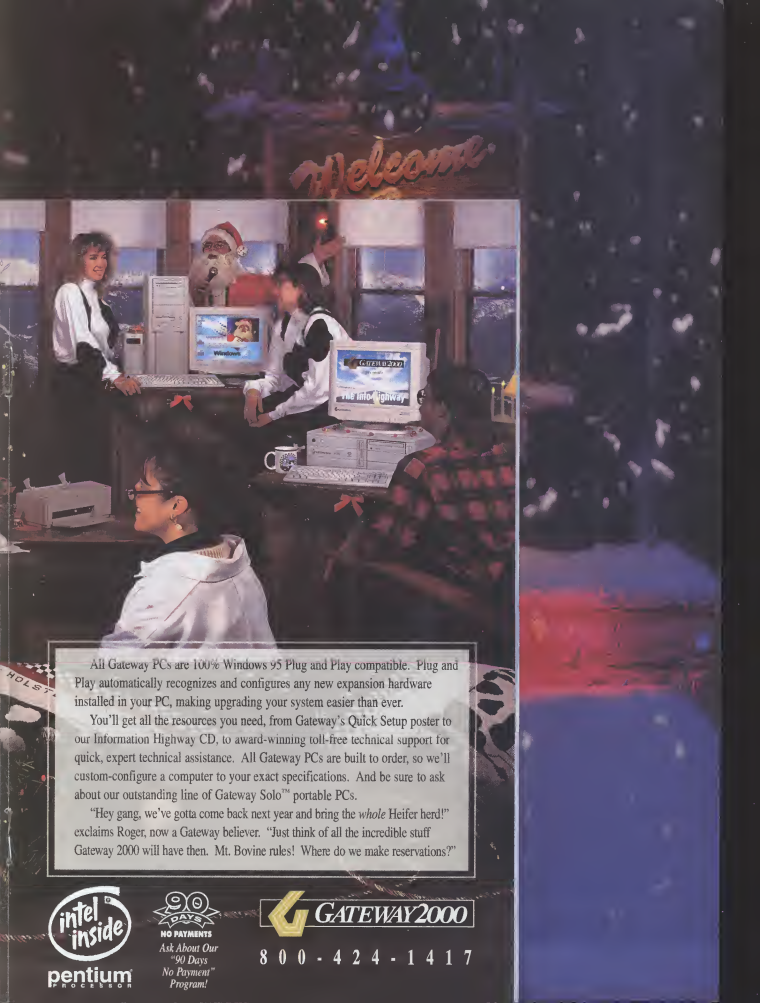
"Hey Heifers! The roads are open. Let's go!" But Roger stops — in awe at the sight of the whole Heifer family happily computing on Gateway 2000® PCs. "Holy cow! You must be joking!" laughs George. "This is the coolest holiday this family's ever had! There's something for everyone here. Plus, Gateway gives you all the resources and technology to make initial start up, daily maintenance, and upgrading for the future easy. Boy, does that ever add to the overall value of a computer! And Gateway 2000 even has a 90-Days No Payment Program."

Value-Packed Pentium-Processor PCs For Today And Tomorrow

Nearly all Gateway 2000 PCs include the Intel® Pentium® processor. All your applications will run better and faster with the extra oomph of this processor, and you'll be prepared to handle the new applications of the future!

Gateway 2000: Making Computing Easy For Everyone

Microsoft®'s new operating system makes working on your computer easier than ever. And all Gateway 2000 keyboards are designed with three keys specifically for Windows® 95. The included MS IntelliType and IntelliPoint software will turn your keyboard and mouse into powerful, personalized computing tools.



All Gateway PCs are 100% Windows 95 Plug and Play compatible. Plug and Play automatically recognizes and configures any new expansion hardware installed in your PC, making upgrading your system easier than ever.

You'll get all the resources you need, from Gateway's Quick Setup poster to our Information Highway CD, to award-winning toll-free technical support for quick, expert technical assistance. All Gateway PCs are built to order, so we'll custom-configure a computer to your exact specifications. And be sure to ask about our outstanding line of Gateway Solo™ portable PCs.

"Hey gang, we've gotta come back next year and bring the *whole* Heifer herd!" exclaims Roger, now a Gateway believer. "Just think of all the incredible stuff Gateway 2000 will have then. Mt. Bovine rules! Where do we make reservations?"

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90 DAYS NO PAYMENTS

Ask About Our "90 Days No Payment" Program!

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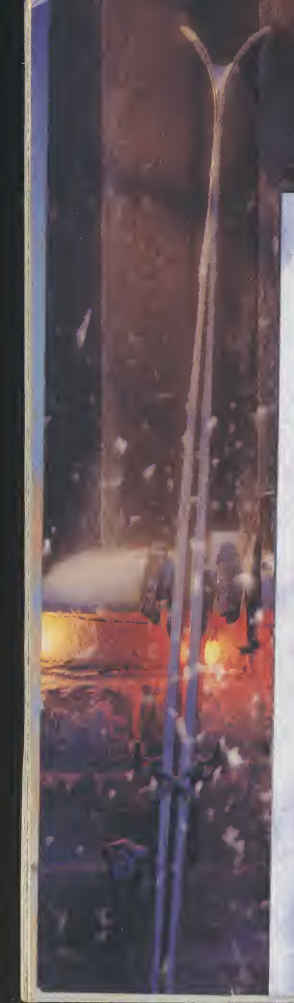

Gateway 2000® Family PC™ Systems

P5-75 FAMILY PC

- Intel® 75MHz Pentium® Processor
- 8MB EDO Performance DRAM
- **850MB 10ms DMA Mode 1 EIDE Hard Drive**
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- **64-Bit PCI Graphics Accelerator w/ 1MB DRAM**
- 4X EIDE CD-ROM
- 16-Bit Gateway Sound Card
- **Altec™ Lansing ACS-40 Speakers**
- TelePath® 14.4 Fax/Modem Communication Center
- **Gateway Information Highway CD**
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 14" .28dp CrystalScan® Color Monitor
- 7-Bay Desktop Case
- **104* Keyboard** & MS Mouse 2.0
- **Microsoft® Windows® 95**
- **Generations II Software Collection**
- **Gateway Gold™ Service & Support**

$1799

P5-100 FAMILY PC

- Intel 100MHz Pentium Processor
- 8MB EDO Performance DRAM
- **1GB 10ms DMA Mode 1 EIDE Hard Drive**
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- **64-Bit PCI Graphics Accelerator w/ 2MB DRAM**
- 4X EIDE CD-ROM
- 16-Bit Gateway Sound Card
- **Altec Lansing ACS-40 Speakers**
- **TelePath 28.8 Fax/Modem Communication Center**
- **Gateway Information Highway CD**
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 15" .28dp CrystalScan Color Monitor
- 7-Bay Desktop Case
- **104* Keyboard** & MS Mouse 2.0
- **MS Windows 95**
- **Generations II Software Collection**
- **Gateway Gold Service & Support**

$2149

P5-120 FAMILY PC

- Intel 120MHz Pentium Processor
- 8MB EDO Performance DRAM
- **1.62GB 9ms DMA Mode 2 EIDE Hard Drive**
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- **64-Bit PCI Graphics Accelerator w/ 2MB DRAM**
- 6X EIDE CD-ROM
- 16-Bit Gateway Sound Card
- **Altec Lansing ACS-40 Speakers**
- **TelePath 28.8 Fax/Modem Communication Center**
- **Gateway Information Highway CD**
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- **15" .26dp Vivitron™ Color Monitor**
- 7-Bay Desktop Case
- **104* Keyboard** & MS Mouse 2.0
- **MS Windows 95**
- **Generations II Software Collection**
- **Gateway Gold Service & Support**

$2499

Generations II
SOFTWARE COLLECTION

■ Microsoft® Encarta® 96 ■ MS Cinemania®'96 ■ MS Julia Child: Home Cooking with Master Chefs ■ MS Bob,™ for Gateway 2000 ■ MS Works 95 ■ MS Publisher 95 ■ MS Money 4.0 ■ MS Golf ■ MS Music Central™ 96 ■ MS CD Sampler ■ MS Entertainment Packs 1-4 (31 fun games!) ■ Cash Graf Home Office Plus™ ■ Mayo Clinic® Family Health Book ■ Mediamatics Arcade™ MPEG Player ■ The Masters®: Interactive Journey Through Its 60-Year History, for MPEG

** MS Office 95, Professional Edition includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint® presentation graphics program, Schedule+, Access database and Bookshelf® '95.*

Gateway 2000 Manufacturing, North Sioux City, South Dakota, is ISO 9002 certified.

ISO 9002 SQA

welcome

Gateway 2000 Family PC Systems

HOLIDAY XL

- Intel 133MHz Pentium Processor
- 16MB EDO Performance DRAM
- 256K Pipelined Burst Cache
- **1.62GB 9ms DMA Mode 2 EIDE Hard Drive**
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- **Matrox® MGA™ 2MB WRAM Graphics Accelerator**
- **6X EIDE CD-ROM Drive**
- 16-Bit Ensoniq® Wavetable Sound Card
- **Altec Lansing ACS-40 Speakers w/ ACS-250 Subwoofer**
- **TelePath 28.8 Fax/Modem Communication Center**
- **Gateway Information Highway CD**
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 17" .28dp CrystalScan Color Monitor
- 12-Bay Tower Case
- **104+ Keyboard** & MS Mouse 2.0
- **MS Windows 95**
- **MS Office 95, Professional Edition***
- **Generations II Software Collection**
- **Gateway Gold Premium Service†**

$3499

Gateway Ultimate Software Bundle

Call today and ask how you can get both Generations II Software Collection and Microsoft Office 95, Professional Edition pre-installed on any Gateway 2000 desktop PC, along with a gaming pad — all for an unbeatable value!*

†Includes priority access to technical experts and extends on-site service agreement to three years total.

GATEWAY GOLD™ SERVICE & SUPPORT

Service When You Need It

- Toll-Free Technical Support 24 Hours A Day, 7 Days A Week
- Free Software Technical Support for all Gateway-provided operating systems & applications (includes Windows 95 Support)
- Industry-Leading Response Times For Toll-Free Support
- 1-Year On-Site Service Agreement**
- Next Business Day Response On-Site Service††
- Extended On-Site Service Hours (6a.m.-10p.m. Monday-Friday, 8a.m.-5p.m. Saturdays)
- Scheduled On-Site Service (2-hour appointment window)
- 3-Year Parts Only Limited Warranty**
- Express Replacement Parts Delivery
- Club Gateway™ Membership
- *GW2K™: Gateway Magazine*
- Gateway Bulletin Board (BBS) Service
- Automated FaxBack Service

††Pending parts delivery for most locations, and when our technicians determine it's necessary.
***Call or write us for a free copy of our warranty or on-site service agreement.*

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Professional Systems

P5-75

- Intel® 75MHz Pentium® Processor
- 8MB EDO Performance DRAM
- **850MB 10ms DMA Mode 1 EIDE Hard Drive**
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- **64-Bit PCI Graphics Accelerator w/ 1MB DRAM**
- 4X EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 14" .28dp CrystalScan® Color Monitor
- 7-Bay Desktop Case
- **104+ Keyboard** & MS Mouse 2.0
- **MS Windows® 95**
- **MS Works 95**
- **Gateway Gold™ Service & Support**

$1599

P5-100

- Intel 100MHz Pentium Processor
- 8MB EDO Performance DRAM
- 256K Pipelined Burst Cache
- **1GB 10ms DMA Mode 2 EIDE Hard Drive**
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- **64-Bit PCI Graphics Accelerator w/ 1MB DRAM**
- 4X EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- **15" .28dp CrystalScan Color Monitor**
- 7-Bay Desktop Case
- **104+ Keyboard** & MS Mouse 2.0
- **MS Windows 95**
- **MS Office 95, Professional Edition***
- **Gateway Gold Service & Support**

$1999

P5-120

- Intel 120MHz Pentium Processor
- 16MB EDO Performance DRAM
- 256K Pipelined Burst Cache
- **1GB 10ms DMA Mode 2 EIDE Hard Drive**
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- **64-Bit PCI Graphics Accelerator w/ 2MB DRAM**
- 4X EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- **15" .26dp Vivitron™ Color Monitor**
- 7-Bay Desktop Case
- **104+ Keyboard** & MS Mouse 2.0
- **MS Windows 95**
- **MS Office 95, Professional Edition***
- **Gateway Gold Service & Support**

$2499

P5-133

- Intel 133MHz Pentium Processor
- 16MB EDO Performance DRAM
- 256K Pipelined Burst Cache
- **1.62GB 9ms DMA Mode 2 EIDE Hard Drive**
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- **64-Bit PCI Graphics Accelerator w/ 2MB DRAM**
- 6X EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- **15" .26dp Vivitron Color Monitor**
- 7-Bay Desktop Case
- **104+ Keyboard** & MS Mouse 2.0
- **MS Windows 95**
- **MS Office 95, Professional Edition***
- **Gateway Gold Service & Support**

$2799

Professional Systems

G6-200

- Intel 200MHz Pentium Pro Processor
- **64MB DRAM**
- **2GB 10ms DMA Mode 2 EIDE Hard Drive**
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- **Matrox® MGA™ 2MB WRAM Graphics Accelerator**
- **6X EIDE CD-ROM Drive**
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 17" 28dp CrystalScan Color Monitor
- 12-Bay Tower Case
- 104+ Keyboard & MS Mouse 2.0
- **MS Windows NT™ Workstation 3.51**
- **MS Office 95, Professional Edition***
- **Gateway Gold Premium Service**

$6199

The G6-200 Professional system has not been approved by the Federal Communications Commision. This device is not, and may not be, offered for sale or lease, or sold or leased until the approval of the FCC has been obtained.

Microsoft® Windows NT Workstation 3.51 Upgrade

If your work demands a powerful operating system, you need MS Windows NT Workstation. Run your 32-bit applications with crash protection and preemptive multitasking, better network access, improved security, and the capability to handle large data files. Available as an upgrade on the P5-120 and P5-133 Professional systems in selected configurations at time of system purchase. **$99**

Service Options

Gateway Gold Premium

- Extended Three-Year On-Site Agreement**
- Priority 800 Number For Access To Technical Experts **$99**

Gateway Gold A La Carte

- On-Site System Installation
- On-Site Upgrade/Add-On Installation
- Hardware and Software Customization/ Integration

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** MS Office 95, Professional Edition includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint® presentation graphics program, Schedule+, Access database and Bookshelf® '95.*

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Get All The Sights and Sounds of

Incredible holiday extras from Gateway 2000, all at outstanding values. All peripherals and software sold only with the purchase of a Gateway system.

Multimedia

Audio Multimedia Kits

Everything you need to add multimedia to a Gateway 2000® PC. Choose a Gateway 16-bit CD-quality sound card or an Ensoniq® Soundscape™16-bit wavetable sound card. Both are Sound Blaster™ compatible and include two Altec™ Lansing ACS-40 speakers.

$95 *(Gateway 16-bit sound card and ACS-40 speakers)*

$115 *(Ensoniq Soundscape 16-bit wavetable sound card and ACS-40 speakers)*

Multimedia Speaker Upgrades

Upgrade the speakers in any Gateway multimedia kit by adding the all-new Altec Lansing ACS-250 subwoofer to provide up to 40 watts of additional bass.

$75 *(upgrade from systems which include Altec ACS-40 speakers)*

The Dolby® Pro-Logic Surround Sound ACS-400 speaker system will make your CD audio multimedia applications come alive with theater-like surround sound. Complete with two Altec Lansing ACS-400 satellites and ACS-250 subwoofer.

$120 *(upgrade from systems which include Altec ACS-40 speakers)*

6X EIDE CD-ROM Drive

Access your software applications and documents faster than ever with this 6X EIDE CD-ROM drive from Gateway 2000, giving you 900KB/second data transfer rate and 214ms average access time. Supports multisession photo CDs and XA format, enabling simultaneous audio and data with additional hardware.

$100 *(upgrade from systems with 4X CD-ROM drive)*

4X Three-CD Changer

Enhance the value and usefulness of your PC with the 4X three-CD changer. It supports multisession photo CDs and XA format, enabling simultaneous audio and data with additional hardware. You'll have access to three times the amount of information of a single CD-ROM drive.

$100 *(upgrade from 4X CD-ROM drive)*

CH FlightStick

The CH FlightStick is engineered specifically to look and feel like a jet joy stick. Features advanced throttle control, contour jet grip with two fire buttons and seven-foot cable. **$35**

Gateway accepts most major credit cards and C.O.D. terms, with net 30-day terms and leasing options available to qualified commercial customers. You can also apply for the Gateway 2000 DuoLine™ MasterCard® card, issued by Dial National Bank, Des Moines, Iowa.

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NO PAYMENTS

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Gateway 2000 Extras!

Software

HOT PICK **10th Anniversary Software Bundle**

Our special 10th Anniversary bundle includes BioForge;™ Wing Commander® III: Heart of the Tiger; Magic Carpet™ II: The Netherworlds; and a Gateway 2000 10th Anniversary T-shirt! **$49**

(BioForge may not be suitable for younger children.)

NEW **Kid's BackPack™ II**

Our new Kid's BackPack II combines learning and fun in a software package specifically designed for kids. Includes What is a Bellybutton?; The Tales of Peter Rabbit; Cinderella; The Original Fairy Tale; Freddi Fish™ and the Case of the Missing Kelp Seeds™; and Pocahontas Reading Adventure, along with a Gateway cow-spotted backpack! **$59**

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Get your finances in order with this new software bundle. Includes Quicken® Deluxe 5; Quicken Financial Planner;™ Quicken Family Lawyer;™ Quicken Parents' Guide To Money;™ and a coupon to receive TurboTax® Deluxe upon release at no extra charge. **$79**

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A new twist on our favorite software bundle! Includes Tuneland;™ Cyberia;™ SimCity;™ Rand McNally TripMaker™ SE; Hometime® Weekend Home Projects; 70 Million Households Phone Book; Consumer Survival Kit; and The 7th Guest™. Also includes 12-CD flip-case holder. **$99**

(The 7th Guest may not be suitable for younger children.)

Sports Pack

Includes Unnecessary Roughness '95;™ Hardball 4;™ FIFA International Soccer, PGA Tour® Golf; NHL® Hockey '95; and NASCAR® Racing. Also includes Gravis GamePad™ and 20-disc storage rack. **$99**

Flight Pack

Includes TFX™; Tactical Fighter Experiment; Aces® Over Europe; Maximum Comanche;® Strike Commander; Privateer; Wing Commander® Armada; and Warplanes. You also get a joystick and 20-disc storage rack. **$99**

Communications & Storage

TelePath® 28.8 Fax/Modem Communication Center

Internal fax/modem, 28,800bps modem, V.34, with 14,400bps fax capability. Sends and receives data and faxes, and also includes voice mail capabilities. Includes the Gateway Information Highway CD giving you trial memberships to CompuServe®, Prodigy®, America Online®, Reuters Money Network online services, and GNN® for easy Internet browsing. **$149** *(upgrade from TelePath 14.4 to TelePath 28.8 Fax/Modem, $70)*

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More Gateway Ways To Make

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Gateway Vivitron™ Color Monitors

Non-interlaced color monitor using Sony® Trinitron® tube technology, capable of 1280 x 1024 resolution.

Gateway 15-Inch Vivitron Color Monitor, .26 dot pitch

Upgrade from a 14" CrystalScan® monitor to 15" Vivitron monitor **$160**

Upgrade from a 15" CrystalScan monitor to 15" Vivitron monitor **$75**

Gateway CrystalScan Color Monitors

Non-interlaced color monitor capable of 1280 x 1024 resolution.

Gateway 15-Inch CrystalScan Color Monitor, .28 dot pitch

Upgrade from a 14" CrystalScan monitor to 15" CrystalScan monitor **$85**

Gateway 17-Inch CrystalScan Color Monitor, .28 dot pitch

Upgrade from a 15" CrystalScan monitor to 17" CrystalScan monitor **$265**

(Upgrade prices good only at time of system purchase.)

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3Com® Ethernet Adapters

10/100 Base-T PCI Card for CAT 5 Unshielded Twisted Pair **$159**

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16-bit Card with only RJ-45 connector **$79**

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32-bit Card with both RJ-45 and BNC connectors **$119**

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Photo-quality printing in color and black-and-white with 720dpi on high-quality glossy paper. Great for home use, and is easy to use. **$339**

Epson Stylus II Color Ink Jet Printer

Perfect for the small business or home office, providing vivid color and crisp black-and-white printing at 720dpi. Plus, it's quiet and compact. **$449**

Hewlett® Packard 5L-FS Printer

Add professional edge to your outputs with 600dpi and HP Resolution Enhancement technology. You'll also enjoy fast laser printing with this printer's speedy 4-ppm engine. **$499**

Epson ActionLaser 1400 Printer

Features a high-performance RISC-based processor optimized to perform operations in fewer clock cycles than a standard CISC, as well as 600 x 600dpi with edge smoothing technology. **$499**

Lexmark™ Optra R

Corporate-quality printer with networking capabilities. Features a 25MHz RISC processor, 2MB memory, true 1200 x 1200dpi, and prints 12ppm. **$1299**

Epson ActionPrinter 3260

This letter-quality, dot-matrix printer prints at 360 x 360dpi with a choice of 10 built-in typefaces and can be upgraded to color. **$209**

All printers include parallel cable.
Call for additional printer options.

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Only available to our valued customers, Microsoft's new operating system will make your system faster and easier to use. And you'll get toll-free technical support for Windows 95 installation, configuration and problem resolution. Order your copy today! **$94** *(On diskettes $104)*

Microsoft Office 95 Professional Upgrade

Microsoft Office 95, Professional Edition is designed to work specifically with the Windows 95 operating system, and includes 32-bit versions of Word, Excel, PowerPoint® presentation graphics, Schedule+, Access database, and Bookshelf® '95. **$264**

Windows 95 & Office 95 Professional Edition Upgrade

For an unbeatable combination value, get both MS Windows 95 and MS Office 95, Professional Edition. Microsoft Windows 95 operating system will make your system faster and easier to use. And you'll get toll-free technical support for Windows 95 installation, configuration, and problem resolution.
Microsoft Office 95, Professional Edition is designed to work specifically with the Windows 95 operating system, and includes 32-bit versions of Word, Excel, PowerPoint presentation graphics, Schedule+, Access database, and Bookshelf '95. **$349**

Service & Support

Gateway Gold™ Premium service and support is available to all new customers as an upgrade to Gateway Gold standard with all Gateway desktop systems. If you are already a Gateway customer and are currently within your one-year on-site service agreement, you can upgrade to the Gateway Gold Premium service option for $99.

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- Priority 800 Number For Access To Technical Experts **$99**

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- MS Automap® Road Atlas 4.0 (CD-ROM) & Ascend® personal information manager (for use with Franklin Day Planner®)
- Microsoft® Windows 95**

V75

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- 75MHz Intel Pentium Processor
- 8MB RAM
- Modular CD-ROM Drive
- 540MB Hard Drive
- MS Works 95
- Carrying Case

$3499

V90 DELUXE

- 10.2" VGA (640 x 480) Display
- 90MHz Intel Pentium Processor
- 8MB RAM
- Modular CD-ROM Drive
- 540MB Hard Drive
- MS Office 95, Professional Edition†
- Carrying Case

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- 10.4" SVGA (800 x 600) Display
- 120MHz Intel Pentium Processor
- 16MB RAM
- Modular CD-ROM Drive
- 1.2GB Hard Drive
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- Desktop IR Module
- Extra Lithium Ion Battery
- MS Office 95, Professional Edition†
- Deluxe Leather Carrying Case

$5999

V120

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- 120MHz Intel Pentium Processor
- 16MB RAM
- Modular CD-ROM Drive
- 720MB Hard Drive
- MS Works 95
- Carrying Case

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DX4-100

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- 340MB Hard Drive
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- External Floppy Drive
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[1] *MS Office 95, Professional Edition includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint® presentation graphics program, Schedule+, Access database and Bookshelf® '95.*

***MS-DOS® 6.22 and MS Windows for Workgroups 3.11 available upon request.*

Designed for Microsoft Windows 95

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- MS Office 95, Professional Edition[1]
- Liberty Leather Carrying Case

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- 28.8 PCMCIA Fax/Modem **$299**
- PCMCIA Network Adapters
  3COM® Twisted Pair Ethernet **$129**
  3COM Coaxial Ethernet **$159**
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- One-year limited warranty standard. (For a free copy, call or write.)
- Three-year limited warranty option. **$100**

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All members of the cast are Gateway employees or their family members. Wishing you a very merry holiday season are: ***Marge*** *(Michelle from Sales); the twins* ***Bernice and Buffy*** *(Katie from Creative Services and her twin sister Mollie),* ***Uncle George*** *(Wes from Information Systems),* ***Roger*** *(Dave from Marketing),* ***Mitch*** *(Ed from Technical Support),* ***Wally*** *(Dax from Portables Technical Support),* ***Bessie*** *(Ed's daughter Mandi), and* ***Billy*** *(Ed's son Quinn, who couldn't be dragged away from NHL® Hockey '95 for this photo).*

Designed for

Microsoft Windows 95

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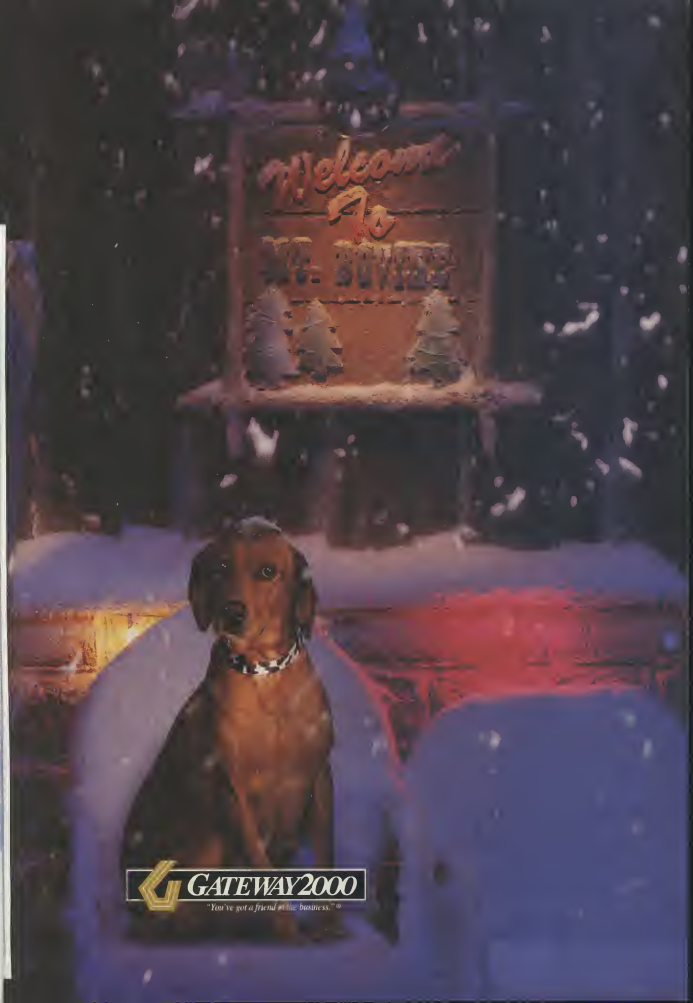
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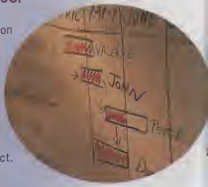
to guide
your project down a clear path

Introducing new Microsoft Project for Windows 95.



Now you can manage projects more simply, more smoothly, by communicating project information as it occurs. With new Microsoft® Project you can convey project status quickly and effectively so your boss, customers, and coworkers are always in the loop. From sharing task deadlines and responsibilities, to letting people know about changes and the impact they'll have on the deadline, you have the tools to organize your projects into manageable steps and keep them moving in the right direction. New Microsoft Project unlocks the doors of communication and gives you the power to navigate the most efficient route to a successful end product.

Graphical views let teammates visualize where the project is going.

With Microsoft Project you can display project data in ways that everyone can understand. Great-looking Gantt Charts integrate text, timelines and graphical bars so everyone can see start and finish dates, interdependencies and task assignments. Throughout your project, you can also use a Monthly Calendar report to share your plan in a format that's clear and easy to read. And since Microsoft Project shares many of the same key commands with other Office applications, it will be easy to create schedules and reports. But if at any time you need help, type in a question and the Answer Wizard gives you the information you need. Microsoft Project helps you illustrate every phase of your project so you and your team keep your goals in sight.

Microsoft

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO TODAY?™

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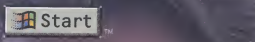
*Microsoft Project works with Microsoft Mail, cc:Mail,™ Lotus Notes® and the Microsoft Exchange inbox for Windows 95. © 1995 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Windows, and the Windows logo are registered trademarks and the Windows Start logo and *Where do you want to go today?* are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. cc:Mail is a trademark of cc:Mail, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Lotus Development Corporation. Lotus Notes is a registered trademark of Lotus Development Corporation.

Keep everyone moving on the same track with open lines of communication.

Microsoft Project is completely integrated with a wide range of e-mail systems* and Schedule+ so that with a single click, changes and additions are immediately distributed to and from teammates. Assignments, task changes, and progress can be communicated and updated without ever reentering information, so you save time and eliminate mistakes. Because Microsoft Project is a member of the Office family, sharing data between programs is easy. For example, you can start building a schedule by simply dragging a task list out of Microsoft Excel and dropping it directly into your Microsoft Project plan. You keep communication clear and information consistent and your project continues to move exactly the way you planned.



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Paul Somerson

Woof

Do you like dogs? I sure do, even though both of mine are slowly eating my house and its contents. They spend all day munching wood, like **GIANT CARNIVOROUS TERMITES.** Recently, a neighbor saw the damage and asked how old they were—*in dog years*. What a concept. Dogs have relatively short lives and age relatively rapidly. So we need an accelerated measurement system for them. For PCs, too.

It used to be you'd upgrade once every couple years. Then **MOORE'S LAW KICKED IN** and Intel trotted out the newest hot CPU. Now these chips are coming every few months.

And it used to be that all the other parts didn't change very much. You stared at small monitors and used small hard disks and slow modems and small amounts of RAM. But GUIs and multimedia and the Web **REWROTE ALL THE RULES.** Now the changes are starting to happen in dog years.

Your PC that seemed so killer months ago suddenly feels like an old, tired mutt. And you find you can't take your mind off that new screamer from Dell, Gateway, Micron. . . .

Your skin tingles. Your palms sweat. Your mouth turns dry. Your pupils go all the way black. Your breathing becomes shallow and rapid. Your limbs feel heavy. Your heart hammers like a sewing machine. Your brain screams, **"I WANT IT! I WANT IT! I WANT IT!"** Honest, boss, it followed me home. Can I keep it?

OK, few of us are rolling in enough dough to buy a new PC every couple months, but as our Usability Labs have proven repeatedly, most of this stuff **PAYS FOR ITSELF** awfully quickly in increased productivity. In days, sometimes.

Frankly, if you're still wrestling with a gutless 386, plunk down a few thousand for a spanking new system. But the revolution isn't just in CPU muscle. **ALMOST EVERY SINGLE PART** of your system will benefit greatly from a visit to your dealer. If your processor still has a little hair on it, you can blast it into high gear with the following trade-ups:

- Huge, speedy, cheap, EIDE or SCSI-2 Fast **HARD DISKS.** Get a gig or two.
- At least 16 megs of RAM, though 32 is better. You can never have enough.
- True-color, 64-bit, accelerated 3-D **GRAPHICS CARDS.** Seeing is believing.
- Plug and Play, 3-D sound, wavetable **SOUND CARDS.** Hearing is believing, too.
- Powered **SPEAKERS.** Throw away those toys and snap in a wall-shaking pair from Cambridge or Advent.
- Big, affordable **SCREENS.** 17-inch is now minimum; 21-inch is better.
- Big-bandwidth **MODEMS.** 28.8Kbps models sell for $150; analog/ISDN combos for $450.
- **CD-ROM DRIVES.** 4X or 6X. And how can you live without a changer?
- Even **CACHES.** Swap out that old asynchronous SRAM for "pipeline burst" memory.

Why wait? Now's the time to upgrade. Don't let your system go to the dogs.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES McGOON

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The Ultimate SMP Pentium® Processor Server Solution

Only Micron can deliver server solutions built on such a unique heritage of award-winning speed, performance, reliability and service. And just like all Micron systems, the PowerServer SMP is engineered to meet the challenge of your most demanding information processing needs–with no compromise in system reliability.

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The PowerServer SMP from Micron. An incredible server at an amazing price. Only from Micron—the technology leader.

P133 POWERSERVER SMP

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- Dual Pentium SMP ZIF sockets
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- Slots: 5 EISA, 2 PCI, 1 EISA/PCI
- PCI 32-bit Ultra SCSI Fast-20 controller
- 4X SCSI-2 CD-ROM drive, 3.5" floppy drive
- PCI 64-bit video, MPEG, 2MB EDO
- Full-size tower with 10 drive bays
- Microsoft® Mouse, 104-key keyboard
- Microsoft Windows® 95 CD

Designed for Microsoft® Windows®95

yes NetWare Tested and Approved

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B • 32MB RAM • 2GB SCSI-2 hard drive
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- With Windows NT Workstation 3.51 CD.....add $249

P266 POWERSERVER SMP

- Dual 133MHz Pentium processors
- 512K write-back cache, flash BIOS
- Slots: 5 EISA, 2 PCI, 1 EISA/PCI
- PCI 32-bit Ultra SCSI Fast-20 controller
- 6X SCSI-2 CD-ROM drive, 3.5" floppy drive
- PCI 64-bit video, MPEG, 2MB EDO
- Full-size tower with 10 drive bays
- Microsoft Mouse, 104-key keyboard
- Microsoft Windows NT Workstation 3.51 CD

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PGM-PCC-9601

Circle 105 on reader service card.

John C. Dvorak

Buzz Off

Lou Gerstner has tried to remold IBM into a more aggressive company, if only to stop the punk kids in Redmond from pointing and laughing at "the old men." But the notion that things are changing has run its course over the past two years, and the only substantive difference is in IBM's number of employees. At this juncture, anyone who's seriously looking at IBM can say with confidence, "It ain't working."

IBM is simply too big to change. It reminds me of how a cop once described prostitution: "It's like a big, rubbery inner tube filled with water. You can stamp down one part, but it bulges up someplace else." IBM is a world unto itself, and its CEO is nothing more than the business equivalent of a cop trying to stamp out prostitution. Gerstner is at a disadvantage because he's unaware of certain marketing tactics in the computer game. To make matters worse, most of the people at IBM are clueless about these maneuvers, too, so they're no help whatsoever.

Market Misfire The main reason IBM falls flat is its lack of what I call *buzzification*—the ability to generate excitement. IBM hasn't got a clue about how to do this. A case in point is the company's unbelievable OS/2 Warp ad campaign, which included a large poster proclaiming that "it obliterates all the software on my computer." This exemplified a naïveté that haunts IBM's upper management. Obviously, nobody could tell that this poster would become an immediate object of derision. And knowing how the company operates, I'm sure a dozen people had to sign off on this turkey.

In fact, when you talk to IBMers about the company's internal workings, it's exasperating to count the number of people who must sign off on the simplest decisions. There is no empowerment within the ranks. Everyone is watched like a hawk for fear they will screw up. Of course, this doesn't breed self-confidence, especially at the lower technical levels, where the smartest guys I know are treated like big dummies.

When someone with brains comes along, they either kowtow to the IBM culture or quit. The ones who relax into the company way lead circumspect lives, and do their jobs much like employees of a stereotypic Japanese corporation—not drawing attention to themselves, obeying, putting up with incompetence from above. There are few young go-getters in this crowd. To compare the company cultures of IBM and Microsoft for yourself, try the following project:

Find two popular developers' conferences and attend them both. Be sure one is sponsored by IBM or related to IBM development, such as OS/2. The other should be involved with Microsoft. Go just to feel the difference in energy levels. IBM conferences have more low-energy engineer types. Very thoughtful, extremely intelligent, but with the demeanor of postal workers. It's depressing. Then check out the Microsoft crowd. Lean, jittery, fast-talking, nervous, high-energy, confident. Arrogant sometimes. Even the coders at Microsoft's events are high-energy. Now that's frightening.

If you examine the backgrounds of these two crowds, you'll find them quite similar. But one is jazzed while the other is blasé. The IBMers' slow-moving approach to the job is instilled from above. They are beaten dogs. IBM execs can't see that when their employees are moping around in public, the public perceives that the company has nothing to offer. IBM magnifies this effect with a PR department that acts like the secret police, discouraging discourse and openly threatening the careers of top technical people if they show any incentive. It's hard to imagine how this mechanism works, but I can assure you that it keeps the talent incredibly fearful. This old IBM has not changed one iota under Gerstner.

Failed Vision The more I watch IBM, the more I see that Gerstner is the wrong man for the job, as talented as he is. I've been reading his various interviews and transcripts of his speeches, and I've concluded that he has the potential to be a computer visionary. But he'll never become one, because he can't create the buzz. And nobody else will be allowed to, thanks to the IBM system. Gerstner's background is alien to such a concept, anyway. You don't need a buzz to sell Oreo cookies or Shredded Wheat. You need distribution. Computers aren't yet commodities like biscuits.

It **BAFFLES** *IBM execs: How does an* **INTROVERT** *like Bill Gates create such a* **BUZZ** *while they fall flat? Computers aren't* **BISCUITS.** *They're about* **EXCITEMENT,** *not distribution.*

There is still plenty of excitement in the computer industry, and it must baffle IBMers to watch how an introvert like Bill Gates masterfully creates a buzz to the detriment of those who do not. My favorite recent comment was during the Windows 95 rollout when the quarterly sales of OS/2 dropped to 900,000. An IBMer moaned that this was because of the excessive media hype over Windows 95. I found this to be rather naïve. What did IBM expect?

It's an old-fashioned company that has developed a life of its own. The head transplant didn't change anything. Obviously, the brains are elsewhere.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES McGOON

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intel inside pentium PROCESSOR

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PC MAGAZINE EDITORS' CHOICE: Pentium-66 April 12, 1994; DX4-100 June 28, 1994; Pentium-60 April 1994; Pentium-90 August 1994

COMPUTER SHOPPER: 486DX2-66 January 1994, February 1994, March 1994, April 1994, December 1994, January 1995, February 1995, March 1995, April 1995; DX4-100 October 1994, November 1994, December 1994; Pentium-60 December 1994, January 1995, February 1995, April 1995; Pentium-66 June 1994, July 1994, August 1994, September 1994; Pentium-90 August 1994, September 1994, October 1994, November 1994, January 1995, February 1995

PC WORLD: Pentium-66 June 1994; Pentium-90 May 1994; Pentium-80 February 1995

Windows EXPERTS' PICK: Pentium-66 June 1994; Pentium-80 August 1994; Pentium-90 November 1994

WINDOWS MAGAZINE 1995 WIN 100: Pentium-60 May 1995

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- Six-bay desktop case with two cooling fans
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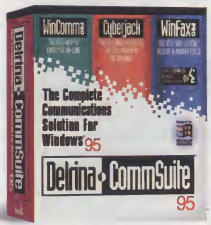

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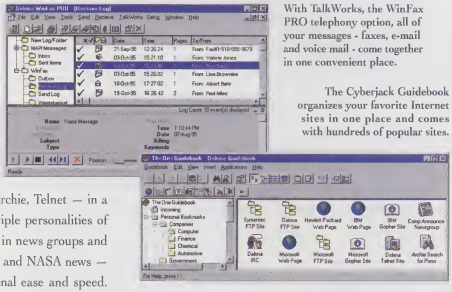

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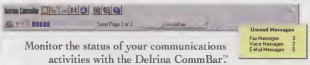

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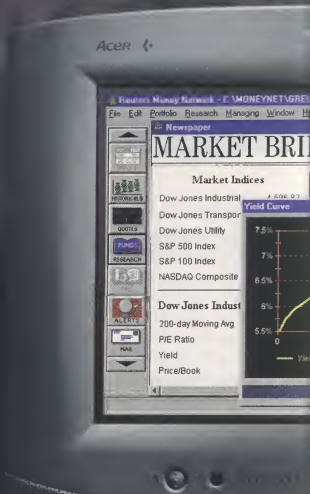

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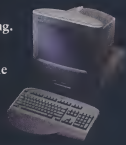

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New!

Pro 150 Magnum Plus, Vectra XU 6/150

Pentium Pro: Power Stations

SNEAK PREVIEW

Talk about obsolescence: Intel's 150MHz Pentium had barely seen the light of day when the next-generation 150MHz Pentium Pros (formerly called P6s) began trickling into our labs.

It's easiest to think of the Pentium and Pentium Pro as parallel universes. As we discovered with two new Pentium Pro–based systems, Hewlett-Packard's Vectra XU 6/150 and Micron's Pro 150 Magnum Plus, straight computational horse races are things of the past. Both machines actually perform slower than regular Pentium-based systems under some Windows 95 and Windows 3.x applications.

But turn them loose on native 32-bit apps running under Windows NT or OS/2, and suddenly you find yourself a riding a rocket. Even fast Pentiums can't compare (see "Overview," below). Both Pentium Pro systems make it clear that from now on, operating systems will guide your purchase of a CPU.

HP's newest Vectra not only scored faster than Micron's Pro 150 Magnum Plus and Dell's Dimension XPS P6 (see "P6 Systems: They're Finally Here!" November 1995, page 68), but it also features the most unusual design of the three. To begin with, it's a multiprocessor desktop PC. Also, HP designed its own motherboard—a surprise, given that almost all first-generation Pentium Pro systems will use Intel motherboards.

What's Fast? We tested the Vectra using both one and two CPUs. In both cases, the machine's performance under Windows NT outshined any x86 PC we've seen. Designing multiprocessor systems with Pentium Pro chips is far easier than with previous Intel CPUs because additional processors don't require extra chip logic. Manufacturers can just slap a second or third chip onto the motherboard and then upgrade the BIOS, no fuss required.

Still, who needs two CPUs in a desktop system? Just ask anyone who works with high-end graphics. (If seeing is believing, try HP's multiprocessor Vectra with Adobe's 32-bit Photoshop 3.04.) For that matter, run any application that makes heavy use of multithreading operations and you'll see immense performance gains. HP's Vectra brings processing muscle previously available only on RISC workstations to the x86 world. It is an absolute boon to CAD, high-end graphics, and multimedia running under Windows NT or OS/2.

For basic business applications, the single-processor Vectra XU 6/150—which costs as little as $4,200—is a better buy. Both machines come with 16MB of Error Correcting Code (ECC) RAM, a 1GB or 2GB Fast SCSI-2 hard drive on a PCI local bus (an Enhanced IDE drive option is also available), a quad-speed CD-ROM drive, 16-bit audio, and 10Base-T/100VG LAN connections. Both versions of the Vectra also feature Matrox's quick 64-bit MGA Millennium graphics controller.

The Vectra uses Intel's Orion PCI chip set, which has no support for EDO RAM. But the CPU's integrated 256K or 512K L2 cache is faster than the optional L2 cache used on many Pentium systems. It makes EDO RAM unnecessary. Instead, the Vectra uses ECC RAM, which detects one- and two-bit errors.

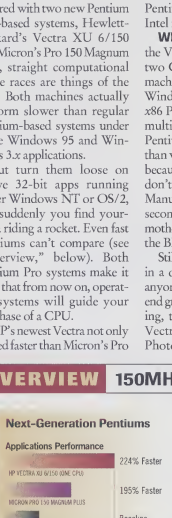
Kudos to the machine's modularity. Pop two levers and the mini-tower case slides forward to reveal an ample chassis. Even the power supply slips away with two simple release mechanisms, revealing the slot for the second CPU. The Vectra features two ISA slots, three PCI slots, and one ISA/PCI slot. The layout makes upgrading and expanding simple tasks.

Go, Go, Go Micron's Pro 150 Magnum Plus might very well be Microsoft's best sales tool for Windows NT. Micron has built its reputation on delivering top-drawer performance and leading-edge technology for bargain prices. It does no less with its new Pentium Pro system. Consider what $5,500 will buy: 32MB of RAM, expandable to 256MB; a 2GB Fast SCSI-2 hard drive (a PCI-based IDE connector is integrated on the motherboard as well); a six-speed CD-ROM drive (SCSI); 16-bit audio; and Diamond's Stealth 64 video card with 2MB of VRAM.

Not bad. In basic Windows NT–native productivity apps such as word processors and spreadsheets, Micron's Pro 150 Magnum was nearly twice as fast as its 133MHz Pentium sibling, Micron's P133 Millennium. It was marginally faster than Dell's Dimension XPS P6 as well, although its performance slipped slightly behind the Dimension XPS in graphics-intensive chores. Overall, the video and disk performance on the Pro 150 Magnum were outstanding.

As with the Vectra, the Pro 150 Magnum's biggest surprise is its minitower chassis. The machine comes with three ISA slots, two PCI slots, and one shared ISA/PCI slot. And its six drive bays are overabundant. But no one will

OVERVIEW 150MHz Desktop PCs



Restless Natives: Pentium Pro–based systems perform no better than their 133MHz Pentium cousins under Windows 95 and Windows 3.x applications. But give them native Windows NT applications, and performance soars.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TROSLIO

Guide to PC Computing's Ratings

Excellent *Market leader that offers exceptional performance* ..... ★★★★★
Good *Excels in many areas; a good buy* ..... ★★★★
Acceptable *Average for its class; a justifiable purchase* ..... ★★★
Poor *Out of date or substandard; offset by some positive features* ..... ★★
Unacceptable *Missing necessary features; avoid* ..... ★

NT Supersystems: The floodgates are open. The first 150MHz Pentium Pro systems are here. Micron's Pro 150 Magnum Plus (left) and HP's Vectra XU 6/150 have all the makings of servers—from Fast SCSI-2 drives to multiple CPUs (in the Vectra only)—but their trim cases make them a perfect design for desktop systems.

mistake this system for a server. Despite Intel's arduous marketing efforts to position the Pentium Pro as a pricey server, system manufacturers have a different idea.

The More the Merrier If HP's Vectra and Micron's Pro 150 Magnum presage anything, it's that widespread acceptance of Windows NT may come more quickly than Intel or Microsoft anticipated. This is especially true now that native 32-bit versions of Excel and Word are available.

And to be sure, Intel's strategy of letting two generations of CPUs live side by side is more than just a concession to the menagerie of operating systems now available. It's part of a larger, divide-and-conquer approach to the market. For the first time since the 8086 CPU debuted more than 15 years ago, Intel is feeling the heat of competitors.

The impressive performance of Cyrix's M1 chip, in particular, has made jaws drop. The 100MHz version of the CPU performs nearly as fast as Intel's 133MHz Pentium. Meanwhile, 120MHz and 133MHz versions of the CPU are scheduled for arrival in the latter part of this year. The chip is compatible with Intel's Pentium, which means that manufacturers can use it with existing motherboards. And like the Pentium, the M1 uses a superscalar design, can execute two instructions at a time, comes with a 16K internal cache, and supports EDO memory. One edge it has on the Pentium is its out-of-order execution—a feature found in the Pentium Pro.

Another Pentium Pro competitor, Advanced Micro Devices' much delayed K5, is a hybrid of Intel's Pentium and Pentium Pro. The K5 can predecode instructions as they are placed in its instruction cache. According to AMD officials, this allows the chip to execute up to four instructions per clock cycle—compared with the Pentium's two instructions and the Pentium Pro's three.

Digital's Windows NT-tuned Alpha, a RISC CPU that appears in Digital's low-cost Celebris XL line of systems, is also vying for the 32-bit market. Of course, you sacrifice *x*86 compatibility. For now, however, systems based on Intel's Pentium Pro chip offer the best balance of price and performance. And for running Windows NT, HP's Vectra XU 6/150 is the best and fastest system in its class. **MARTY JEROME**

FILEBOX

Pro 150 Magnum Plus

Usability	★★★★
Performance	★★★★
Technology	★★★★
Verdict	★★★★

Blinding speed, and look how far your dollars go.

Features as Tested: 32MB of RAM (expandable to 256MB), 2GB Fast SCSI-2 hard drive, Diamond's Stealth 64 video card with 2MB of VRAM, six-speed CD-ROM drive (SCSI), 16-bit audio, PCI bus-mastering IDE drive controller, 256K L2 cache, three ISA slots, two PCI slots, and one shared ISA/PCI slot.

$5,500 est. street price
Micron Electronics
(800) 347-3490
Reader Service No. 617

Vectra XU 6/150

Usability	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Technology	★★★★★
Verdict	★★★★★

Brings RISC-workstation power to the desktop at Intel *x*86 prices.

Features as Tested: 32MB of RAM (expandable to 256MB), 2GB Fast SCSI-2 hard drive on PCI local bus (1GB available), quad-speed CD-ROM drive, 16-bit audio, integrated 10Base-T/100VG LAN connections, Matrox 64-bit MGA Millennium video card with 2MB of WRAM, 256K and 512K L2 cache, two 16-bit ISA slots, three PCI slots, and one shared ISA/PCI slot.

$5,700 est. street price
Hewlett-Packard
(800) 752-0900
Reader Service No. 618

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*3 years - parts; 1 year - labor.

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LaserJet 5Si MX

Network Printing Revolution

It's been two and a half years in the making, but the LaserJet 5Si MX, Hewlett-Packard's upgrade to its venerable LaserJet 4Si MX network laser printer, is here at last. And we assure you, it was worth the wait. The 24-page-per-minute LaserJet 5Si MX is unquestionably the best high-speed network printer money can buy.

The LaserJet 5Si MX sets the standard for usability in network printing. Plug it in, and within minutes you're producing 600-dpi documents at a blazing 24 ppm. Fortunately, its high speed doesn't mean high cost. The basic LaserJet 5Si costs a mere $2,999, while the LaserJet 5Si MX, which offers 8MB of RAM, PostScript Level 2, and a JetDirect Ethernet card, is a competitive $4,299.

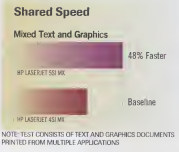
Print on Demand Despite its hefty 100-pound weight, the LaserJet 5Si MX is a pleasure to set up. JetAdmin, HP's network software, is easy to use thanks to its tabbed dialog boxes. Both end-users and administrators can use the software to change multiple settings with just a few mouse clicks.

Aside from its fancy software, the LaserJet 5Si MX contains some welcome hardware innovations. Its default paper capacity is 1,100 sheets, with two 500-page input trays and one 100-page input tray. For $1,299, you can boost that capacity to 3,100 sheets with the optional 2,000-page input tray.

Another cool add-on feature is the multibin mailbox, which is priced at $1,889. Think of it as sorting trays on a copier, only you can assign bins to individual users. This means your print jobs are always where you expect to find them, and not mixed with 12 other people's jobs.

Amazing Pace: The LaserJet 5Si MX is the best printer for the busiest networks. With its 24-ppm, 600-dpi engine, it churns out great-looking pages faster than you can say, "Where's my document?"

Net Gains: Whether your network traffics PCL or PostScript text and graphics files, the LaserJet 5Si MX gives you 48 percent speed gains over the LaserJet 4Si MX.



Barely Time to Wait Did we mention that this printer is fast? In our mixed PCL and PostScript document tests, the LaserJet 5Si MX was 48 percent faster than the 4Si MX. In fact, the LaserJet 5Si MX was not too far behind QMS's 3825, a $21,000, 38-ppm printer. Speed differences weren't as dramatic in tests with simple files—the LaserJet 5Si MX was about 30 percent faster than the 4Si MX when printing a collection of word-processing and business-graphics documents.

No other printer in this speed or price range can touch HP's LaserJet 5Si MX. Xerox's 4520mp, with its 20-ppm engine, is the only contender. But in our network printing tests (see "Network Superguide," November 1995, page 166), the 4520mp failed to stand up to the 16-ppm LaserJet 4Si MX. Moreover, the LaserJet 5Si MX's price can't be beat. With its faster engine and added features, it costs about the same as the 4Si MX.

What's the LaserJet 5Si MX missing? It can't sort pages or staple your documents—yet. It has all the other bases covered, from top-notch paper handling to laser-fast printing speeds. If your department needs a capable network printer, you have no other choice. Get the LaserJet 5Si MX. KYLA K. CARLSON

FILEBOX

LaserJet 5Si MX

Usability	★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Technology	★★★★★
Verdict	★★★★★

The ultimate 24-ppm printer for the end of your network.

Competition: No other printer in this price range offers a 24-ppm engine or the paper-handling features of the LaserJet 5Si MX.

Features as Tested: 12MB of RAM, PCL5e, PostScript Level 2, JetDirect print-server card for Ethernet and LocalTalk.

Paper Handling: Two 500-page input trays, one 100-page input tray. Optional 2,000-page input bin for $1,299.

Configuration Options: Multibin mailbox for $1,889; duplex unit for $669; 100-sheet envelope feeder for $549. $2,999 for the LaserJet 5Si; $4,299 for the LaserJet 5Si MX, with 8MB of RAM, PostScript Level 2, and the JetDirect Ethernet card.

$4,299 est. street price
Hewlett-Packard
(800) 527-3753
Reader Service No. 619

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TIESLAU

Picture-perfect Telecommunications

SNEAK PREVIEW

Videoconferencing makes a great first impression. But while most companies like the *idea* of videoconferencing, the expense and configuration hassles have been prohibitive. The VideoPhone, a new videoconferencing solution from Connectix, could change that. For only $149, the VideoPhone delivers high-quality black-and-white videoconferencing and data sharing over standard phone or network lines.

The VideoPhone connects via TCP/IP, IPX, ISDN, or Digital Simultaneous Voice and Data (DSVD) analog modem. Although the VideoPhone's video window displays black-and-white images at only 24 frames per second (fps), the price is unbeatable and the results are surprisingly good.

Eye to Eye: Connectix's $149 VideoPhone delivers basic videoconferencing over a network, the Internet, and analog phone lines. VideoPhone is bundled with Future Labs' TalkShow and Connectix's QuickCam, a black-and-white digital camera (above).

Smile for the Camera The VideoPhone includes Connectix's QuickCam, a 6-bit grayscale digital camera; Future Labs' TalkShow, a shared whiteboard application that lets you simultaneously share and annotate data files; and scaleable compression software for transmitting audio and video.

Hardware setup was quick and easy. The camera plugs right into your PC's parallel port and draws power from the keyboard port through a simple pass-through adapter plug.

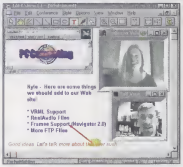
Connectix's VideoPhone software is a 16-bit application, but it worked fine under Windows 95 in our tests (a 32-bit Windows 95 version is in the works). We had problems connecting over IPX on our NetWare network, however, because the VideoPhone doesn't support Microsoft's Open Datalink Interface (ODI) client for NetWare. Connectix said support would be ready by the end of the year. Connecting via TCP/IP was as easy as typing in an Internet protocol address and choosing Call from the File menu.

Once connected, the VideoPhone displays the image from the remote camera, as well as the view from the camera on your system. If both computers have sound cards, speakers, and microphones, you can have uninterrupted full-duplex conversations (meaning both people can speak at the same time) while trading data files and video images.

Take a Good Look Other bundled software includes QuickPick, an image-capture utility, and QuickMovie, a utility that lets you create, save, and send movies as AVI files. There's also multicast broadcast support, which lets one VideoPhone QuickCam broadcast to an unlimited number of non–video-equipped clients. You can distribute the viewing software to as many people as you like, meaning you're able to use a single camera-equipped PC to broadcast real-time training or announcements to everyone in your organization.

The VideoPhone is the first of several applications from Connectix to leverage the $99 QuickCam. Also in the works is QuickCards, an application for making video greeting-cards; Badgemaker, which you can set up in your business lobby to record visitors and create photo identification cards for them; and QuickStudio, a program for editing images. A color version of the camera should be available early this year for an additional $100.

While the VideoPhone lacks the picture quality of high-end videoconferencing solutions like PictureTel's, it costs thousands less. For quick and basic videoconferencing over a network or analog phone lines, the VideoPhone is a terrific buy. RICH SCHWERIN



Now See Here: VideoPhone includes TalkShow, a shared whiteboard application from Future Labs. TalkShow lets you review documents, edit presentations, and annotate diagrams from any Windows-based application.

FILEBOX

VideoPhone

Usability ★★★★

Verdict ★★★★

Low-cost plug-and-go videoconferencing.

Competition: Creative Labs' ShareVision PC 3000 includes a modem, color camera, and video-capture board—but costs hundreds more.

System Requirements: Windows 3.1, Windows 3.11, or Windows 95; 486 CPU, 8MB of RAM; sound board.

Features: 6-bit grayscale digital camera, Future Labs' TalkShow, shared whiteboard, scaleable video and audio compression, and more.

$149 est. street price
Connectix Corp.
(800) 950-5880, (415) 571-5100
Reader Service No. 621

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TIDES/O

With any other notebook, you just can't see the whole picture.

Introducing the ThinkPad 760. And the world's largest notebook screen.

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The ThinkPad® 760 comes with 8MB of RAM, a 90MHz[2] Pentium® chip, up to a 1.2GB[3] hard drive and some handy numbers: Call 1 800 426-7161[4] to order, or 1 800 772-2227[5] to receive faxed information (option 2, ID # 11760). Or visit our Web site at www.pc.ibm.com/thinkpad/ for details.

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[1]Supports half-horizontal resolution [2]Internal speed. External speed=60MHz [3]GB=billion bytes [4]M - F 8am - 8pm EST [5]In Canada: call 1 800 465-3299 (ID # 45244). Screen not actual size. IBM and ThinkPad are registered trademarks and UltraBay and Solutions for a small planet are trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation. Pentium is a registered trademark of Intel Corp. ©1996 IBM Corporation.

Scan-It and Save-It Smarts

When Visioneer introduced the PaperPort a little over a year ago, the paperless office didn't seem like such a dream. Since then, more than a dozen document scanners have hit the market, each claiming to cut the paper in your in-box down to size. Three new document scanners—Visioneer's upgraded PaperPort Vx, Logitech's PageScan Color, and Microtek's PageWiz—bring the less-paper office even closer to reality.

Strong Upgrade The original document scanner, Visioneer's PaperPort, now tackles a variety of document types and offers more sophisticated document management. The upgraded PaperPort Vx offers all the tricks of the original, including lightning-fast scanning, OCR, document annotations, and e-mail and fax linking. But the new version adds file-management software, scans up to 256 shades of gray (great for scanning images), and includes basic photo-editing tools. You can also scan business cards using Corex's bundled CardScan SE software, although (as with most business-card software) the results were spotty.

Overall, this is a strong upgrade. The file-management feature alone makes it worth the money. Software-only upgrades for owners of the original PaperPort will be available in coming months.

All-Purpose Power Logitech's PageScan Color handles everything the PaperPort Vx does, including OCR, fax, file management, and annotation—and also adds color. The PageScan is almost as fast as the PaperPort Vx, costs only $40 more, and can easily double for a low-end image scanner since it scans up to 200 dpi in color. It also detaches from its base, so if you want to scan a magazine or book page, you can remove the scanner and roll the reader directly over the page. The one shortcoming of the PageScan Color is that it saves images only in standard formats like JPEG or PCX (not in compressed proprietary formats, as with the PaperPort Vx), which results in large files.

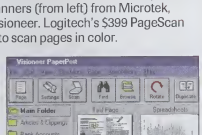
File size aside, the PageScan Color is a great all-purpose scanner. With the growing popularity of color printers, the PageScan Color is ready for the future.

The Basics The PageWiz, which offers the same core features as the original PaperPort, is the least expensive new page scanner with a street price of less than $200. It's also completely optimized for Windows 95. When you want to fax a document, for example, the PageWiz lets Windows 95 take care of it.

The PageWiz handles just the basics. If you're willing to pass on full-featured document-management options, it does the trick—and it costs about $160 less than the others.

For quick-and-easy document management, the PaperPort Vx is a superb solution. For just $40 more, Logitech's PageScan Color offers nearly as much document-management flexibility and comparable speed—plus 200-dpi color scanning. But if cost is everything, Microtek's PageWiz won't disappoint. JACK LYON

Paper Punishers: Move paper off your desk and onto your hard drive with the newest crop of document scanners (from left) from Microtek, Logitech, and Visioneer. Logitech's $399 PageScan Color is the first to scan pages in color.



Dynamic Documents: Visioneer's PaperPort Vx offers new file-management tools as well as more document flexibility.

FILEBOX

PageScan Color

Usability ****
Performance ****
Technology *****
Verdict ****
Competitive performance and price—plus color scanning.

Bundled Software: Xerox's TextBridge, Documagic's PaperMaster SE.

Scanner Resolution: 400-dpi black; 200-dpi color.

$399 est. street price
Logitech
(800) 231-7717
(510) 795-8500
Reader Service No. 622

PageWiz

Usability ****
Performance ***
Technology ***
Verdict ***
A solid document scanner at an ultra-affordable price.

Bundled Software: Caere's OmniPage Lite.

Scanner Resolution: 300 dpi.

$199 est. street price
Microtek Labs
(800) 654-4160
(310) 297-5000
Reader Service No. 623

PaperPort Vx

Usability *****
Performance ****
Technology ****
Verdict ****
For black-and-white document management, nothing comes close.

Bundled Software: Caere's OmniPage Lite, PictureWorks Technologies' PictureWorks Copier, Corex's CardScan SE.

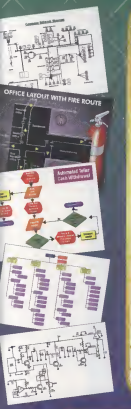
Scanner Resolution: 400 dpi.

$359 est. street price
Visioneer
(800) 787-7007
(415) 812-6400
Reader Service No. 624

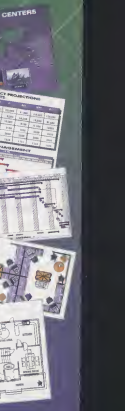
PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TOSELIO

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

CorelFLOW 3 BEATS VISIO 4!



FEATURE	CorelFLOW 3	Visio 4
Symbols	6,400+	1,000+
Smart Symbol Libraries/Stencils	205	29
Clipart	160	0
Clipart	1,500	0
Photos	1,000	0
Live repeating line patterns	YES	NO
Polygon tool	YES	NO
Fountain fills	YES	NO
Center and repeating arrows	YES	NO
Hyperlinks	YES	NO
Dynamic print preview	YES	NO
Multiple shadows	YES	NO
Thesaurus and Type Assist	YES	NO
Live auto-line routing	YES	NO
Script editor	YES	NO
Number of color models supported	8	2



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- Flow Charts
- Timelines
- Process Flow Charts
- Marketing

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- Block Diagrams
- Boolean Logic
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Presentation Sizzle You Can Afford

The next time a weary bean counter begins his presentation with an overhead projector and a fistful of acetates, politely tell him that the world has changed. Tell him that sensory deprivation is no longer an option for business presentations. Tell him about NEC Technologies' Versa 4050C and Toshiba's Satellite Pro 410CDT.

Both machines cost less than $5,000. And both feature Pentium power, bright active-matrix displays, CD-ROM drives, and 16-bit audio.

Quick Switch NEC's Versa 4050C is powered by a 90MHz Pentium, supports 800-by-600-pixel resolution on the LCD, and builds on modularity that's been the Versa line's trademark for more than four years. You can swap out the CD-ROM drive for a floppy drive, second hard drive, or second battery.

The Versa's LCD is superb—one of the best and brightest we've seen. It renders 256 hues at 1,024 by 768 pixels (as does the Satellite Pro 410CDT), and it comes with an 810MB hard drive—1GB is optional. A 256K L2 cache is standard, and a 120MHz model of the notebook should be available by the time you read this.

In other words, the Versa is a full-powered, full-featured portable with a great complement of useful extras. An infrared port is standard equipment and the hard drive is removable. The Versa also uses lithium-ion batteries, providing longer charge life than do nickel-metal hydride batteries.

Usability has improved, but there are trade-offs. The horrendous front-mounted, pea-size trackball has been replaced with a touch-pad pointer that allots the keyboard a comfortable wrist rest. On the downside, the notebook has become somewhat tubby: At 7 pounds and 9.5-by-11.7-by-2.1 inches, it's not a pleasant machine to tote.

Still, the AC adapter is smaller than a bar of soap, and the dual speakers belt out plenty of sound, even if audio quality is somewhat tinny.

Road-Ready Toshiba's Satellite Pro 410CDT not only stacks up well against the Versa 4050C, it also features several subtle advantages that may give it an edge, depending on your needs. For example, it comes with a removable quad-speed CD-ROM drive; the Versa has only a double-speed CD-ROM drive. The new 11.3-inch display also suits 800-by-600 resolution better than the Versa's 10.4-inch screen does.

The Satellite's 90MHz Pentium lacks an L2 cache, although its speedy video and fast CD performance give it plenty of muscle for multimedia. Bring your own external speakers, though; the Satellite's single speaker undermines sophisticated audio tracks.

Usability on the Satellite wins high marks: The keyboard layout is comfortable, and the large crescent-shaped mouse buttons—placed one on top of the other—are worth emulating. The floppy drive slips into an external case that connects to the notebook through a proprietary port, which lets you use the floppy and CD-ROM simultaneously.

If CD-ROM-drive performance and a large, high-resolution screen are important to you, Toshiba's Satellite Pro 410CDT is the notebook to buy. But NEC's Versa 4050C offers slightly more expansion options. Texas Instruments' Extensa 550CDT, meanwhile, costs $1,000 less while surrendering little in features or power. Watch for price wars soon. MARTY JEROME

Mighty Multimedia: Today's Pentium-based multimedia portables cost less than you might expect. The Satellite Pro 410CDT (left) and Versa 4050C are priced under $5,000, yet each includes 16-bit audio and a removable CD-ROM drive.

CD Swap: The CD-ROM drive on NEC's Versa 4050C swaps out for a floppy drive, second hard drive, or second battery.

FILEBOX

Satellite Pro 410CDT

Usability	****
Performance	****
Technology	****
Verdict	****

A quad-speed CD-ROM drive and high-resolution video? We'll take it.

Features as Tested: 90MHz Pentium, 8MB of RAM, 810MB hard drive, quad-speed CD-ROM drive, 16-bit audio, single speaker.

$4,699 est. street price
Toshiba America
(800) 999-4273
Reader Service No. 625

Versa 4050C

Usability	****
Performance	****
Technology	****
Verdict	****

As midpriced portables go, this should top your shopping list.

Features as Tested: 90MHz Pentium, 256K L2 cache, 8MB of RAM, 810MB hard drive, double-speed CD-ROM drive, 16-bit audio, dual stereo speakers.

$4,679 est. street price
NEC Technologies
(800) 632-4636
Reader Service No. 626

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARNALD TUSSLER

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

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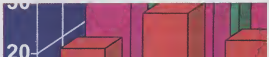
Color That's Worth the Wait

Color in Style: The Stylus Pro, with its ink-jet color output on coated paper, competes with printers that cost thousands of dollars more. The catch? Slow print speeds at high resolutions.

Razzle-Dazzle: There's nothing we didn't like about the Stylus Pro's 720-dpi output, particularly when using Epson's special coated paper. Colors dance off the page, fine lines are razor sharp, and the level of detail is outstanding. You won't get all this from any other ink-jet printer in this price range.



FILEBOX

Stylus Pro

Usability	***
Performance	**
Technology	****
Verdict	***

Terrific high-resolution, ink-jet color if you don't mind the wait.

Competition: Hewlett-Packard's DeskJet 660C costs about $300 less and offers better print quality at the lower 360-dpi resolution. When it comes to output at the higher 720-dpi resolution, however, no ink jet in this price range comes near the Stylus Pro in quality.

Resolution: Up to 720 dpi for color and black text.

Print Speeds: Up to 3 ppm for black text; up to 1 ppm for color documents.

Cost per Page: 12.5 cents for 360-dpi black; 18 cents for 720-dpi color.

$799 est. street price
Epson
(800) 289-3776
(310) 782-0770

When color quality counts and you can't afford a $4,000 color-laser printer, there's one printer you'll want on your desk: Epson's Stylus Pro. This upgrade to the ground-breaking Stylus offers the best color output available from a desktop ink-jet printer. But you need patience—the printer takes its own sweet time. It offers up to 720-dpi color output, and the images are breathtaking, particularly when printing on Epson's special coated paper.

Colorful Characters Setting up the Stylus Pro is a cinch. Install the cartridges (one for cyan, magenta, and yellow, and one for black) and drivers, and you're set. One annoying setup quirk: To insert paper into the input tray, you have to remove the cover that acts as the output tray. We'd rather be able to just slide the paper in.

The Stylus Pro's drivers, which are compatible with Windows 3.1 and Windows 95, are well organized and easy to use. A tabbed dialog-box interface makes for easy navigation among print options, such as Document Type (automatic, presentation, photograph, and so on), Paper, Printing Mode, and Image Settings. Switching resolution, paper type, and output-quality options are also straightforward.

The printer's default resolution is 360 dpi. Plain-paper output is very good—only slightly below the quality of Hewlett-Packard's DeskJet 660C. Lines are sharp and colors look good, even though they could be brighter. Unless you set the MicroWeave option, which can increase print time substantially, you may see banding in printed graphics.

Text output isn't impressive at 360 dpi. The blacks aren't very dark, and the characters lack the sharpness of those printed with the DeskJet 660C. But jack up the resolution of the Stylus Pro to 720 dpi and use the special coated paper, and the printer tells an entirely different story. Graphics output is dazzling; colors are rich and vibrant, and the crispness of images is unbeatable for an ink jet. Text output also improves at 720 dpi, although not as dramatically. For text-only documents, you'll want to stick with 360 dpi.

All in Good Time Alas, there's a catch to the quality prints: High-resolution output takes much longer than the default 360 dpi. Our 11-page text document took just over six minutes at 360 dpi. But at 720 dpi, we waited more than an hour. HP's DeskJet 660C took only six minutes to print the same document at 720 dpi.

For just $799, you can have great output that will serve you well in any professional situation. The only drawback is the printer's slow speeds. But if you want the best color output of any ink jet in this class, the crisp pages produced by Epson's Stylus Pro are worth the wait. KYLA K. CARLSON

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TODESJO

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

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One-Button Backup

SNEAK PREVIEW

Tape backup is still the most affordable form of data insurance for your hard drive. Trouble is, most tape drives are too difficult to install and use. Iomega's Ditto Easy 800 is an inexpensive and easy-to-use tape drive that stores up to 800MB of compressed data on a single Travan-standard tape.

The Ditto's software is amazingly simple. Install it, click on a button, and Ditto goes to work in the background. You can program the drive to back up only specific files or have it perform scheduled backups.

Simplicity doesn't equal perfection, however. The Ditto Easy 800 makes a humming noise as it backs up. And since a full backup takes a few hours, it's easier on the ears to start it when you're not around. One problem: If the Ditto runs across a corrupt file it can't copy, it stops and asks you what to do. That's fine if you're around, but not if you scheduled the backup for when you're away.

The sleekly designed Ditto is the easiest backup solution we've yet to come across. It's not speedy and it's not sophisticated, but at $150 for the drive and $30 for each 800MB tape, it's easily the best hard-disk insurance you'll find for the price. JACK LYON

Simple Security: Iomega's $150 Ditto Easy 800 makes backing up your hard drive as easy as pressing a button. It stores up to 800MB on a single tape.

FILEBOX

Ditto Easy 800

Usability	****
Performance	***
Technology	****
Verdict	****

Backing up your hard drive has never been easier.

Competition: MicroSolution's Backpack 800 TD is just as simple and comes with more-sophisticated software, but it costs more.

$150 est. street price
Iomega Corp.
(800) 697-8833, (801) 778-1000
Reader Service No. 631

SureStore CD-Writer 4020i

CD Recorder at a Record Price

In the not-too-distant future, high-capacity optical discs will be as inexpensive and ubiquitous as floppies. In the meantime, we have CD-Recordable drives for recording your own CDs. Hewlett-Packard's SureStore CD-Writer 4020i is the first CD-R drive to make rolling your own CDs as easy as copying files to a floppy disk—for less than a $1,000.

The CD-Writer is a double-speed recorder that also acts as a quad-speed reader for everyday use. HP provides all the tools you need to create your own discs, including a SCSI controller, blank discs, and Incat's Easy-CD Pro software.

The recording software integrates with Windows 3.x's File Manager or Windows 95's Explorer. To save data onto a CD, simply select files in File Manager or Explorer and choose "Write to CD" from the menu. We would have preferred to drag and drop files into a folder, but this light version of Easy-CD keeps things simple. And you can also use CD-Writer to master your own audio CDs.

HP's CD-Writer makes it financially and logistically feasible to distribute catalogs, archive files, or publish databases on CD-ROM. When you need to create mass quantities of CDs, just send the discs to a duplication house. If you manage really big projects, however, you'll want to consider upgrading the software to the full version of Incat's Easy-CD or Corel's CD Creator.

If you've been waiting for a usable CD-R drive at a reasonable price, HP's CD-Writer fits the bill. SCOTT NAYLOR

Write Your Own: HP's SureStore CD-Writer 4020i is the first double-speed CD Recorder for under $1,000.

FILEBOX

SureStore CD-Writer 4020i

Usability	****
Performance	*****
Technology	****
Verdict	****

The easiest and most affordable way to record your own CD-ROMs.

Competition: The first CD recorder to cost less than $1,000. Look for other companies to follow suit—some with jukeboxes—later this year.

Features: Bus-mastering SCSI controller, Incat's Easy-CD Pro software, and data-management software.

$999 est. street price
Hewlett-Packard
(800) 810-0134, (970) 635-1500
Reader Service No. 632

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARNOLD TIGSLIO

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

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TELLING STORY.

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SPORTSTER PROVED BEST IN COMPATIBILITY.

Paired in every possible combination, the Sportster with *True* V.34™ topped them all in test after test. In fact, the Sportster proved more compatible with several of the other brands than those modems were with their own brand.

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Even under the widest array of line conditions, U.S. Robotics Sportster came in first, delivering up to 177% more data. Which makes the bottom line simple: If you're in the market for a V.34 modem, you can listen to a lot of stories. Or you can check out the facts. Call us for a summary report on the test methodology and findings.

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FOREIGN FILMS AND VIDEOS	12,000	6,400
MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON YOUR MOVIE PREFERENCES	YES	NO
VIDEOS AVAILABLE FOR ONLINE PURCHASE[1]	YES	NO

[1]FROM ANYWHERE WITHIN THE UNITED STATES OR CANADA.

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SmartSuite 96

An Intelligent Office Alternative

SNEAK PREVIEW

If you took the immediate-upgrade path to Windows 95, then you know you could have chosen any business application suite you wanted—as long as it was Microsoft's Office. Finally, you have another option: Lotus's SmartSuite 96 for Windows 95 has arrived.

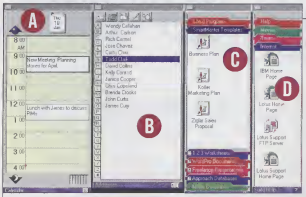
The result is an innovative suite with several new Windows 95 applications and a promise of more to follow. For offices standardized on Lotus products, SmartSuite 96 is a solid upgrade. All of its components are tightly integrated and will be familiar territory for longtime Lotus fans. But offices that have completely upgraded to Windows 95 should keep in mind that Microsoft's Office is still the only completely 32-bit suite available.

Missing Pieces Lotus's new applications are impressive. SmartSuite 96 includes Approach 96, Freelance Graphics 96, and Word Pro 96. Organizer 2.1 and ScreenCam 2.0 are also included, but 32-bit Windows 95 versions won't be available until later this year. The biggest disappointment is that this upgrade lacks a 32-bit version of Lotus 1-2-3. You'll find the aging Lotus 1-2-3 Release 5 in the box with a dreaded coupon for a free upgrade to 1-2-3 96 when it's available (before summer, we hope). You'll also receive a free upgrade coupon for Organizer 96 when it becomes available later this year.

The newest version of Microsoft's Office has the Microsoft Office Shortcut Bar (MOSB). SmartSuite, on the other hand, offers the SmartCenter. The toolbars have similar features, but MOSB can be placed on all four sides of your screen, while Lotus's Cabinet (a subset of SmartCenter) resides only at the top or bottom. Cabinet is a collection of drawers and navigation bars that give you quick access to the most-used applications and files, but MOSB offers more essential options such as icons for the Open and New file commands. Rather than opening or starting new files from within an application, MOSB lets you do it all from the Taskbar. For example, you don't need to open your Word app to open a Word document. Customizing MOSB is a bit easier than with SmartCenter, which takes some trial and error to set up just the way you like.

But SmartCenter offers something that Office's MOSB doesn't: one-click access to your calendar and address book through its SmartCenter drawers. These drawers are linked to your Organizer file; you can add and edit items directly in your calendar or to-do list from the SmartCenter drawer as long as the same file isn't open in Organizer at the same time.

Looks Familiar Lotus has taken great pains to continue its tradition of providing cross-application consistency in its SmartSuite 96 applications. The major 32-bit apps—Freelance Graphics 96, Word Pro 96, and Approach 96—all have



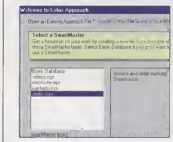
SmartCenter: Every application in SmartSuite 96 is available through the SmartCenter. Drawers hold your calendar, address book, files, and other essential information.

A. The **calendar drawer** opens your daily schedule in Lotus's Organizer.

B. Need to make a call? Just open your **addresses drawer** to find the number.

C. For a jump start, use **SmartMaster**, a library of templates for documents, presentations, and more.

D. Confused? The **help drawer** has everything you need, including links to the Lotus Support Internet home page.



First Things First: All of the 32-bit applications in SmartSuite 96 use identical opening screens that let you choose to create a new file or open an existing one.

FILEBOX

SmartSuite 96

Usability	***
Technology	****
Verdict	****

An impressive upgrade, but not all of the apps are 32 bits.

Competition: Microsoft's Office is the only other Windows 95 application suite. Office's collection of applications and suite-navigation tools are similar to those of SmartSuite 96, but Office has the edge with all 32-bit applications.

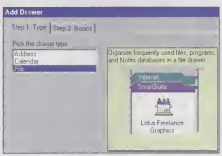
Components: Approach 96, Freelance Graphics 96, Word Pro 96, Organizer 2.1, and ScreenCam 2.0. Coupons for free upgrades to Lotus 1-2-3 96 and Organizer 96 are included.

System Requirements: Windows 95 or Windows NT, 486 CPU, 8MB of RAM (12MB recommended), approximately 55MB of hard disk space (140MB for a full installation).

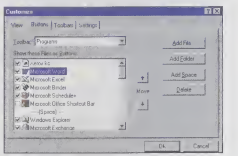
$399 est. street price; $199 competitive upgrade
Lotus Development Corp.
(800) 343-5414
(617) 577-8500
Reader Service No. 637

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

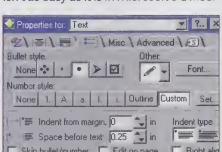
SIDE BY SIDE SmartSuite 96 vs. Microsoft Office



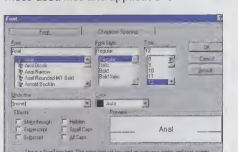
Smart Drawers: SmartSuite 96 offers a simple dialog box to help manage the Cabinet drawers in SmartCenter, but advanced file and app management isn't as easy as it is in Microsoft's Office.



Design Your Space: By comparison, the Shortcut Bar in Microsoft's Office is simple to learn. An easy-to-navigate interface lets you quickly arrange your most-used files and applications.



Instant Info: SmartSuite 96's context-sensitive InfoBox, which you'll find in all the included applications, gives you a single place to adjust attributes and formatting for the selected item.



Several Menus Deep: With Microsoft's Office, you have to click through several dialog boxes to change text and file attributes—not nearly as straightforward as SmartSuite 96's InfoBox.

common dialog boxes and a group of consistent SmartIcons and menus. This consistency makes you feel right at home, regardless of which application you're using.

The InfoBox is the coolest feature in SmartSuite 96's applications. A right-mouse-button click brings up a context-sensitive dialog box that lets you control all the attributes of a selected item. For example, when you're editing text, the InfoBox lets you change the font, point size, attribute, color, and advanced formatting options such as bullets, numbering, or style properties. Even better, the InfoBox gives you immediate visual feedback on your results.

SmartSuite 96's Windows 95 applications are major revisions with hundreds of new features and enhancements. The most eagerly awaited application, Word Pro 96 (see "Ami Pro Returns as a Word Pro," July 1995, page 60), contains several features that set it apart from its main competitor, Microsoft's Word. The most notable new feature, a versioning tool, lets you store multiple revisions of a document in a single file.

Another new feature in Word Pro is its unique spell-checker. Run a spell-check when you're finished editing your document, and rather than stopping at each misspelled word, Word Pro highlights all the misspelled words while you view the entire document. With a quick glance, it's easy to bypass the proper names, acronyms, and technical terms that stump your spell-checker.

You'll also find TeamReview and TeamConsolidate features in Word Pro, which are handy for document distribution and gathering, as well as combining comments from numerous coworkers.

The latest version of Freelance Graphics (see "Power to Persuade with Windows 95," September 1995, page 94) includes new tools that let you create presentations quickly and painlessly. SmartMasters gives you suggestions about content and hints from well-known sales and marketing executives. The program also has team-computing features, similar to Word Pro's, that let you share and comment on presentations.

Usability improvements in Approach 96 (see "The First Wave of Windows 95 Databases," page 162) are geared toward less-experienced users, and more features were added for power users.

Live Net Links SmartCenter and all of the 32-bit applications in SmartSuite 96 offer hooks into the Internet. In SmartCenter, you get direct links to IBM's home page and Lotus's support and home pages, as long as you have a Web browser. Word Pro 96, Freelance Graphics 96, and Approach 96 all let you save information as HTML documents, while Word Pro lets you open and save files directly from the World Wide Web and FTP servers. In addition, Approach contains a database of more than 500 URL addresses.

The best thing that SmartSuite brings to the table is a choice—you're no longer forced to take the Microsoft Office route to receive 32-bit application support. SmartSuite is, however, missing some pieces—there are no updated versions of Lotus 1-2-3, Organizer, or ScreenCam. While the application upgrades in Microsoft's Office aren't earth-shattering, they do bring each application up to 32-bit status and provide common features.

SmartSuite 96 does, however, provide the most significant application upgrades you'll find in one box. If you work in a Lotus-based site, you'll want this upgrade right away. **KYLA K. CARLSON**

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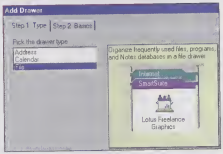
SIDE BY SIDE SmartSuite 96 vs. Microsoft Office



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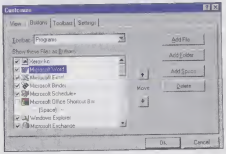

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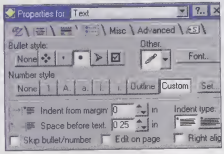

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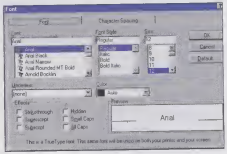

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create presentations quickly and painlessly. SmartMasters gives you suggestions about content and hints from well-known sales and marketing executives. The program also has team-computing features, similar to Word Pro's, that let you share and comment on presentations.

Usability improvements in Approach 96 (see "The First Wave of Windows 95 Databases," page 162) are geared toward less-experienced users, and more features were added for power users.

Live Net Links SmartCenter and all of the 32-bit applications in SmartSuite 96 offer hooks into the Internet. In SmartCenter, you get direct links to IBM's home page and Lotus's support and home pages, as long as you have a Web browser. Word Pro 96, Freelance Graphics 96, and Approach 96 all let you save information as HTML documents, while Word Pro lets you open and save files directly from the World Wide Web and FTP

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Circle 133 on reader service card.

Navigate the Net Interactively

SNEAK PREVIEW

If you've never used Netscape's Navigator to browse the Web, you're missing out. The world's most popular browser supports more elements of the Internet—including complex text and graphics formatting—than any other Internet viewer.

The new $49 version, Navigator 2.0, adds even more innovations, including e-mail, newsgroups, chat functions, HTML 3.0 and Java support, file transfers, and substantial performance enhancements. If you're already using Navigator, upgrade now. If you're using another browser, switch today. And if you're an Internet newbie, this is the browser to get you started.

Live Objects Support for HTML 3.0 means Navigator can display textured backgrounds, tables, blinking text, colored hypertext links, and transparencies. No other browser offers this much support. There's also a new feature called Frames that allows sites to publish content in several interactive windows that are displayed on one screen—imagine picture-within-a-picture TV technology. For example, one frame contains advertising, another holds navigational buttons, and a third has an interactive news report.

Also new is support for embedded objects such as multimedia presentations created in Macromedia's Director or documents published in Adobe's Acrobat. Click on the object, and Navigator runs it automatically. Get ready for the Web to start looking very different.

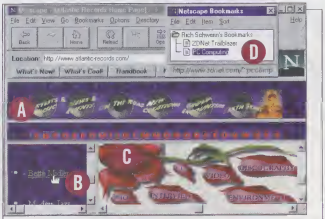
The e-mail client has a personal address book and drag-and-drop features. You can embed Web URLs and pages directly into messages to create HTML mail: Send a friend a cool Web site, and she can double-click on the embedded hypertext link to view it. Check out newsgroups via a similar client that makes easy work of sorting, reading, and posting threads. As with the e-mail client, you can use it to embed Web URLs and pages into your newsgroup postings.

Navigator 2.0 supports autoscrolling, so Web sites can build chat features directly into a frame. For serious chat addicts, Netscape's chat client is available separately. It offers embedding tools similar to those in the e-mail and news clients. Bookmarks, vastly improved from the previous version, are now sorted in hierarchical folders. You can also get Netscape's SmartMarks add-on for Navigator. SmartMarks automatically monitors and updates your favorite sites. You'll find basic chat and bookmarking features in Navigator 2.0, but serious surfers will want Chat and SmartMarks. They're available in Netscape's $54 Navigator Power Pack.

Hot Java Navigator 2.0 also supports Java applets. These applets, which are turning up on Web sites everywhere, can include anything from animation, interactive games, video, and audio, to continually updated information like sports scores, traffic reports, weather information, stock-market data, and general news. When you happen upon one of these with Navigator 2.0, simply click on it and the applet begins.

Security is a thorny issue for Netscape, as several graduate students recently exposed fatal flaws in Navigator's supposedly ironclad armor. The flaws were quickly patched, and to good net effect: Netscape is continuing to strengthen security. Watch for additional Net security products in the future.

Despite these glitches, Netscape's Navigator continues to lead the pack. There are other browsers, but none can rival Navigator 2.0's power. RICH SCHWERIN



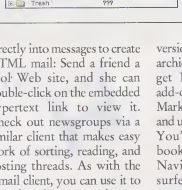
Windows to the World: Version 2.0 of the most popular Web browser, Netscape's Navigator, gains dozens of new features. For example, Frames lets you open several windows at once. Navigator 2.0 also supports e-mail, newsgroups, and HTML 3.0.

A. Open several windows at a time using **Frames.**

B. Point and click in one navigation window . . .

C. . . . while **content changes** in another.

D. Bookmarks lets you drag and drop favorite sites into directory trees.



Mail Links: The e-mail client lets you embed live URLs and HTML documents into e-mail messages.

FILEBOX

Navigator 2.0

Usability	★★★★
Technology	★★★★★
Verdict	★★★★★

Still the most advanced Web browser you can buy.

Competition: Dozens of Web browsers, many of which are based on Spyglass's Enhanced Mosaic, and other commercial Internet suites are vying for Navigator's 70 percent market share. But none of them match Navigator's advanced features, integration, and ease of use.

System Requirements: Windows 95, 486 CPU, 8MB of RAM, 4MB of disk space, Internet access.

Options: Versions available for Windows for Workgroups 3.11, Windows 3.1, Windows NT 3.5, Unix, and Macintosh.

$49 est. street price
(free trial copy available from ftp://ftp.netscape.com)
Netscape Communications
(800) 638-7483
(415) 528-2555
Reader Service No. 638

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

The IBM PC 300 comes with a Pentium processor, 256 KB L2 cache, ZIF sockets, 8 MB (exp to 128 MB), 4 SIMM slots.

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Grab Your Fair Market Share

SNEAK PREVIEW

Ever wonder why Coke is more popular than RC Cola? The drinks taste similar, but Coke is clearly the king. The key lies in how the products are marketed. Hands-On Technology's Crush CD-ROM is the first multimedia tool that helps you build marketing strategies. It offers lessons from marketing guru Regis McKenna, case examples from companies including Intuit and Porsche, and a simple database for devising your plan.

Market Research Hands-On did some initial tests in the marketing departments of several large companies. The results showed that 23 percent of Fortune 500 companies were using the prerelease version of Crush for their own marketing schemes two weeks before the final version was available. Despite some minor interface glitches and the lack of a simple way to export or share your plan electronically, this product is a marketing manager's dream come true.

The CD addresses a broad range of marketing strategies. Experienced marketing professionals might not need the tutorials, but they're essential for entrepreneurs and businesspeople who are new to the marketing game. Although there isn't a glossary, most questions can be answered with the Mentor tool, which explains concepts and terminology.

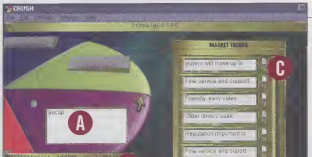
You start by entering information about the target market and its needs, product-related trends, differences between competitors, and so on. It's a great brainstorming vehicle, and Crush's suggestions include some not-so-obvious considerations such as related legal and political trends. These sessions not only help you precisely define the market you're trying to reach, but they also give you ideas about markets you might not have considered otherwise.

Get the Upper Hand After adding data on trends and potential markets, you get to the fun part: plotting against your competitors, exposing their weaknesses, and devising your strategies. Using the data you provided, Crush constructs a graph that compares your company with competitors. Finally, the Action Plan delivers an impressive one-page report detailing steps your company can take to gain and maintain market share.

To back up your plan, you can link your ideas to any application. For example, link a specific entry to an existing Excel report. Click on the link, and it launches Excel.

The end result isn't a full-scale marketing plan, but it does present a good skeleton strategy. You simply fill in the schematics and budget considerations. Unfortunately, Crush doesn't let you view the data in any other application, so sharing information is difficult. You can export it as raw ASCII text, but the results aren't pretty. Thankfully, you can print out a variety of professional-looking reports. Industry-specific sample data comes on the CD-ROM to get you started, and more is available from Hands-On's Web site (http://www.hot.sf.ca.us).

At $499, Crush is a terrific tool for businesses looking for new marketing insights and product-development plans. Because most of the tutorial information comes from Regis McKenna's books, new businesses with tight budgets may want to start by reading those. But for any marketing group looking for new ways to position a product, Crush is well worth the money. JACK LYON

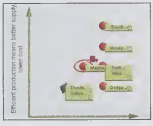


Crush the Competition: Can your PC make you a better marketing manager? Hands-On Technology's Crush helps you pinpoint the trends and tells you how to increase your market share.

A. Crush lets you **analyze diverse trends** that could affect your marketing plans.

B. Marketing sage **Regis McKenna** shares his wisdom.

C. You can **link the market data** in the program to your own businesses numbers.



Competitive Edge: After you've entered all your marketing information, Crush shows you how your business measures up to the competition on several levels.

FILEBOX

Crush

Usability	****
Technology	****
Verdict	****

The first comprehensive marketing-strategy tool—with advice from Regis McKenna.

Competition: A few marketing books available on CD-ROM offer marketing advice, but Crush goes beyond that by providing strategies.

System Requirements: 486 CPU, 12MB of RAM, 12MB of hard-disk space, double-speed CD-ROM drive, audio system.

Online Information: Hands-On Technology's Web site (http://wwwhot.sf.ca.us/) offers market-research data you can import into Crush. The information covers several industries, including pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, and banking. Although many of the data sets are available free, some cost extra.

$499 est. street price
Hands-On Technology
(800) 772-2580, (415) 579-7755
Reader Service No. 639

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

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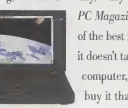

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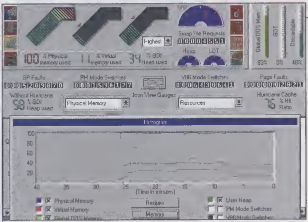
An End to Out-of-Memory Errors

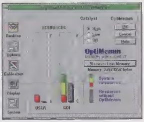
Windows 3.*x* can be such a scamp. One of its favorite practical jokes is to display a message saying there's not enough memory to run an application. So you add 4MB of RAM, but Windows displays the same message again.

Lack of memory might not be the problem, after all. But you *may* be low on system resources that aren't affected by the amount of RAM. One way to wipe the grin off Windows 3.*x*'s face—without upgrading to Windows 95—is to use a system-resource management utility, also known (misleadingly) as a RAM doubler.

We tested three Windows 3.*x* programs that attempt to solve the resource problem in different ways: Binar Graphics' AnyView Professional, Helix's Hurricane, and Connectix's RAM Doubler. A fourth program, Quarterdeck's MagnaRAM 2, doubles system memory but doesn't optimize system resources. We tested all of these packages on a number of systems using a variety of applications.



RAM Boosters: Squeeze better performance from your system—without adding RAM—with a resource-management utility such as Helix's Hurricane.



Another View: AnyView Professional doesn't improve memory handling under Windows 3.1, but it does offer utilities that increase the speed of your graphics display.

RAM Cram Hurricane, MagnaRAM, and RAM Doubler were easy to install. AnyView took longer, in large part because it does much more than manage your system—it accelerates graphics, switches color depth and resolution on the fly, matches screen and printer colors, and manages your monitor's power consumption.

Hurricane and RAM Doubler performed best in our application testing. We could open the most programs and files before running out of RAM. They also sped through the program-loading process. While Hurricane appeals to the incurable tinkerer, RAM Doubler is an install-it-and-forget-it program. Hurricane's control panel lets you track different areas of memory management and add extras such as a print cache and screen accelerator. And it comes with a gauge that measures physical and virtual memory and CPU usage.

Times Two AnyView Professional comes with a system-resource–management utility called OptiMemm, but it didn't noticeably improve Windows' raw handling of memory. On the other hand, it offers utilities for older systems that make Windows graphics run faster, let you change colors and resolutions, and save monitor energy.

MagnaRAM doubles system memory by compressing data. It doesn't give Windows 3.*x* more resources, however, and it works only with the virtual-memory swap file. In our tests, it allowed us to open larger files (gargantuan spreadsheets and bitmapped images, for example), but it didn't boost the number of applications we could run simultaneously. A 32-bit version of MagnaRAM is also available.

Hurricane and RAM Doubler are the real winners. Both provide dramatic increases in the number of applications and files you can open without depleting your system's resources. An alternative is a Windows 95 upgrade with built-in fixes for memory-related and system-resources problems. But as long as there are non–Windows 95 users, Hurricane and RAM Doubler are great workarounds for RAM cram. RON WHITE

FILEBOX

AnyView Professional

Usability	**
Performance	****
Technology	***
Verdict	***

Manages resources, video resolutions, and colors from one simple interface.

$49 est. street price
Binar Graphics
(800) 228-0666, (415) 491-4182
Reader Service No. 640

Hurricane

Usability	****
Performance	****
Technology	****
Verdict	****

Excellent Windows 3.1 memory and resource control.

$55 est. street price
Helix Software
(800) 451-0551, (718) 392-3100
Reader Service No. 641

MagnaRAM 2

Usability	**
Performance	***
Technology	***
Verdict	***

Lets you open larger documents and files, but not more applications.

Options: A Windows 95 version of MagnaRAM is also available.

$60 est. street price
Quarterdeck Corp.
(800) 683-6696, (813) 443-1331
Reader Service No. 642

RAM Doubler

Usability	****
Performance	****
Technology	****
Verdict	****

The hands-off solution for managing Windows 3.1 system resources.

$65 est. street price
Connectix
(800) 950-5880, (415) 571-5100
Reader Service No. 643

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

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Designed for Windows with NT

matrox

*Computed price/performance ratios using ZiffDavis Winbench 95 on an Intel Triton PCI3 system with 256k cache, 16M DDO RAM at 1024 x 768 in 256 colors [2] As large fonts The Matrox MGA Millennium and Diamond Stealth 64 Video were were configured with 2 MB of memory and the Number Nine Imagine 128 was configured with 4 MB of memory for the PCI bus using driver release 2.11.4.10 SP3 and 1.06 respectively

Circle 154 on reader service card.

Build a Better Bottom Line

SNEAK PREVIEW

Just as accountants juggle debits and credits, hoping to balance the books, Windows accounting software juggles ease-of-use and power, hoping for a perfect balance. Three new packages—DacEasy's Accounting & Payroll '95, BestWare's M.Y.O.B. Accounting 6.0, and NEBS Software's One-Write Plus 5.0—do just that.

Each covers the essentials—payables, receivables, inventory tracking, and payroll. In terms of general accounting features, it's a three-way tie. So we sized up their differences: interface, network connectivity, and price. M.Y.O.B. Accounting 6.0 has a radically different interface that lets you see your books graphically; it's the easiest to use of the three. Accounting & Payroll '95 is networkable, allowing for multiple users. And One-Write Plus 5.0 is the price bargain of the bunch.

Because no accounting package can easily import records from other packages, the beginning of the year is the best time to switch.

Basic Bean-Counting

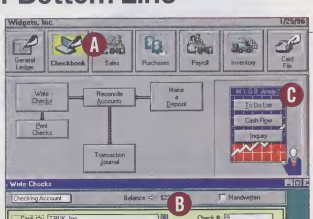
M.Y.O.B. 6.0 is the simplest to use because a completely graphical interface lets you get to any record quickly and easily. It also has the best tools for data entry, with autofill and pull-down menus to simplify the bookkeeping process. M.Y.O.B's Analyst helps you generate to-do lists and checks your balance sheets, payroll records, and other financial data for validity. If you prefer a completely graphical interface and need enhanced data entry, M.Y.O.B. is your all-around best bet of the three.

DacEasy's Accounting & Payroll '95 is networkable, an essential feature for businesses with more than one accountant. A designated administrator can limit access on a user-by-user basis so that if someone needs to input only certain sales, for example, that's all the information they'll have access to. Accounting & Payroll's interface is simple, and its online help system makes it accessible even to novices. If you work in an office with more than one bookkeeper, Accounting & Payroll is your best choice.

One-Write Plus 5.0 marks NEBS Software's Windows debut, and its biggest plus is the low price. For only $69, One-Write Plus includes accounting and payroll modules (many other packages treat payroll as an add-on and charge extra for it). One-Write Plus has the leanest interface of the three; you usually won't get more than three windows deep. Pull-down menus and autofills make for quick data entry (a la M.Y.O.B.). And although the interface isn't the prettiest or the easiest to use, One-Write Plus is a real price value.

In the Black Your choices are simple: Pick M.Y.O.B. Accounting 6.0 for a completely graphical interface and easy data entry. Sign on with Accounting & Payroll '95 if you need a networkable solution. And if price is the primary concern, no one beats One-Write Plus 5.0.

Keep in mind, however, that Intuit's QuickBooks is still the favorite Windows accounting package, followed closely by Peachtree Accounting; new iterations of both are right around the corner. (Look for a review of QuickBooks in an upcoming issue.) Unless one of these three fills an immediate need, you may want to wait. JACK LYON



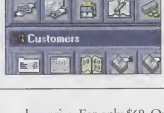
Taking Care of Business: All three products are masters at balancing the books, but M.Y.O.B. 6.0's graphical layout makes simple work of entering data, paying bills, and tracking account transactions.

A. In M.Y.O.B. 6.0, everything from your account balances to your debt records starts in the **Command Center.**

B. Check writing is also done graphically. Pull-down menus let you quickly enter information.

C. M.Y.O.B.'s Analyst lets you logically **plan and analyze** your finances, creating tasks and checking your data's integrity.

Net Accounting: DacEasy's Accounting & Payroll '95 is the best LAN solution, although working through its help balloons can be nerve-racking.



FILEBOX

Accounting & Payroll '95

Technology ****
Verdict ****
Networks several accountants with one basic package. One-of-a-kind for its price.

$119 est. street price
DacEasy
(800) 322-3279, (214) 248-0205
Reader Service No. 644

M.Y.O.B. Accounting 6.0

Technology ****
Verdict ****
Clean interface and easy data input make it the simplest of the bunch.

$80 est. street price,
$126 with payroll utility
BestWare
(800) 322-6962, (201) 586-2200
Reader Service No. 645

One-Write Plus 5.0

Technology ****
Verdict ***
No-frills interface, but the price is right. Includes all the accounting basics.

$69 est. street price
NEBS Software
(800) 882-5254, (603) 880-5100
Reader Service No. 646

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

After scanning the car with HP ScanJet 4c, we added and manipulated Corel Professional Photos using Corel PHOTO-PAINT 5 to create this exciting image.

Together Corel PHOTO-PAINT 5 and the HP ScanJet 4c Color/Grayscale scanner can help you unleash the power of your imagination in creating impressive documents, flyers, and brochures. Now when you purchase the HP ScanJet 4c scanner you will also receive Corel PHOTO-PAINT 5.

HP ScanJet 4c

- Easy to use scanning software for the novice or expert
- Scan images at 2,400 dpi enhanced optical resolution (600 dpi optical resolution)
- One billion colors (30-bit internal) for improved shadow detail and smoother colors
- 10-bit internal grayscale for 1,024 levels of gray
- Also comes with Calera Wordscan OCR and HP ScanJet Copy utility for making color and black and white copies
- Includes Visioneer PaperPort software for easy e-mailing, filing and faxing of documents
- Affordable scanning solution for only $1,179 US list, $1,679 Cdn list

COREL PHOTO-PAINT 5

The Best in Photo-Editing and Bitmap Creation

- Precise photo-retouching: edit, crop, change colors
- Amazing special effects: mesh warp, swirl, pinch, 3D perspectives
- Over 50 image enhancement filters: swirl, wet paint, glass block, psychedelic
- Accurate color calibration system
- Enter text directly on screen: up to 32,000 characters
- Load and edit partial images
- Intuitive user interface: fun and easy to use

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Corel PHOTO-PAINT NUMBER ONE in IMAGE-EDITING

Product	S.E.P. (US$)	Overall weighted score
Corel PHOTO-PAINT 5 Plus	$249	44
Micrografx Picture Publisher 5.0	$595	42
Adobe PhotoShop 3.0	$895	39
Fractal Design Painter 3	$499	38

PC World
Best Buy Award,
April 1995

3.5" disk version

KUR-0375

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COREL
http://www.corel.com

"The best in photo-editing and bitmap creation."

Circle 127 on reader service card.

Improve Your View of Graphics

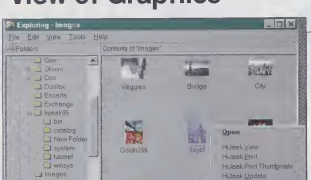
The best Windows utilities make you wonder why Microsoft didn't make them part of Windows itself. HiJaak 95 sparks that question with its outstanding graphics handling.

HiJaak still captures screen images and converts graphics files from one format to another, but with this Windows 95 upgrade its principal role is that of a graphics viewer and manager. Instead of giving you generic icons, HiJaak 95 shows you full-color thumbnails of graphics files and lets you quickly view, manipulate, copy, and convert images.

What's most impressive is how HiJaak 95 works. It operates in Windows Explorer, My Computer, and Network Neighborhood, and in many cases it works invisible. The program updates graphics files in the background according to the priority level or scheduled time. An expanded menu offers view, print, update, and convert commands. Only then does the application appear onsreen.

Using OLE 2.0, HiJaak 95 lets you drag and drop thumbnails directly into applications. And its new Catalog Find function lets you search for files by a variety of criteria.

These smart features, coupled with support for dozens of file formats, make HiJaak 95 an indispensable graphics utility. CHRIS O'MALLEY



Inside Look: Why didn't Microsoft think of this? HiJaak 95 replaces generic icons of graphics files with thumbnails of the actual images in Explorer.

FILEBOX

HiJaak 95

Usability	★★★★★
Technology	★★★★★
Verdict	★★★★★

If you work with graphics files under Windows 95, this will be your most valuable utility.

System Requirements: Windows 95, 486 CPU, 8MB of RAM, 12MB of disk space.

Features: Image-format converter, image manager.

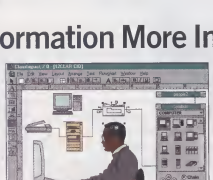
$99 est. street price
Inset Systems
(800) 374-6738
Reader Service No. 649

ClarisImpact 2.0

Give Your Information More Impact

Most of us aren't artists, but we do need to create visually interesting charts, tables, and other basic business graphics. ClarisImpact 2.0, a comprehensive business graphics application, covers everything from time lines to presentations. The best part is that ClarisImpact is tailored to those of us who are color-blind and artistically challenged—and need the work done yesterday.

ClarisImpact guides you from beginning to end—just click on an option like Drawing, Report, Outline, Presentation, or Timeline. You're then given subcategory options with types of charts, including Total Quality Management, network diagram, decision maker, and brainstorm. Once you've selected a diagram, choose relevant symbols and drop them onto the page.



High Impact: ClarisImpact gives you the tools for creating attractive charts, diagrams, outlines, and tables.

In addition to the core diagrammer, ClarisImpact contains a presentation utility, an outliner, a table creator, and drawing tools. A special DataDraw function lets you associate a spreadsheet or database with a graphic, and ClarisImpact will draw an organizational chart or time line based on your data. Although it doesn't support OLE 2.0, ClarisImpact 2.0 is a full 32-bit application.

If you use graphics at work, you need a business graphics application. Visio 4.0 is the reigning king of diagrammers, but it doesn't handle the outlining, presentations, and graphics that ClarisImpact does. If you don't know how to draw—and you don't want to learn—try ClarisImpact before hiring the next freelancer. JAMES OLIVER CURY

FILEBOX

ClarisImpact 2.0

Usability	★★★★
Technology	★★★
Verdict	★★★★

A complete, simple business-graphics solution for people who hate to draw.

Competition: Visio 4.0 offers better drag-and-drop diagramming tools, but it doesn't include presentation tools, slide-show features, or an outliner. Other packages cost more and aren't as easy to use.

System Requirements: Windows 3.1 or later, 386 CPU, 4MB of RAM.

$99 est. street price
Claris Corp.
(800) 544-8554
Reader Service No. 650

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

Connectix

IN THE MID-50'S, THE PHONE COMPANY PROMISED THE ARRIVAL OF THE VIDEO PHONE.

We got tired of waiting.

The result of our mounting impatience is the easy-to-use, extremely affordable Connectix VideoPhone™. A complete camera and software solution that, for under $200, turns your computer into a desktop videoconferencing workstation. Connectix VideoPhone lets you video conference and share a mark-up board. Attend meetings from home. Make office-wide presentations. Or show your ideas to your co-workers down the hall or across the country. Because rather than wait another forty years for the phone company to come up with VideoPhone, we thought we would just do it ourselves.

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Circle 149 on reader service card.

It's pretty clear who's in charge here, at least from where you're standing. And the LTE 5000® could help you stay there.

It's a Pentium® powered notebook featuring interchangeable devices — and the remarkable ability to invoke superhuman powers upon its user. Its unique, front-loading MultiBay makes it completely modular, so you can show up at any meeting with a notebook customized for the agenda. Choose from a second hard drive (up to 1.35 gigabytes), a CD-ROM drive, a second battery, or a floppy drive to create the notebook that's right for the task at hand. An expansion base also features two additional MultiBays (and looks great on a giant glass desk). Interested? Call 1-800-345-1518 (select PaqFax) or visit our Web site at www.compaq.com.

THE COMPAQ LTE 5000. THE ULTIMATE N

cd-rom drive	dual hard drive	dual battery	floppy drive	expansion base

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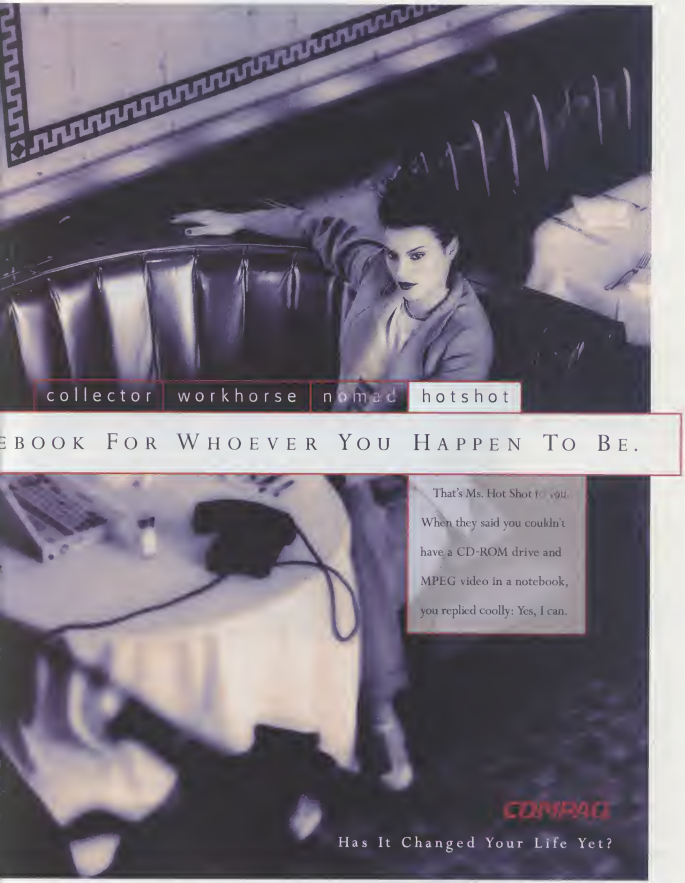
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That's Ms. Hot Shot to you.
When they said you couldn't have a CD-ROM drive and MPEG video in a notebook, you replied coolly: Yes, I can.
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All six years of it.

It goes into the bank and gets processed into the system.

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multitasking (allowing a wide range of bank services to be processed simultaneously) since 1992. And as more companies come to depend on networked environments, OS/2's strengths are helping them succeed.

But banks aren't the only ones who are using it. OS/2 (along with its latest release, OS/2 Warp Connect) is hard at work every day in insurance companies, fast-food checkout systems, automated teller machines and airline reservations – businesses where downtime due to a computer system error is simply not an option.

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ConnectPlus LT vs. LANexpress 4000

Reach Your Network from Afar

If you're at home or traveling and need files from your office system, a modem-to-modem remote-access setup is invaluable. But what if you have to access a database or download a spreadsheet from the network server? Your desktop solution can't help you, but a remote LAN server can.

Two new LAN servers from each end of the price spectrum are Emulex's $750 ConnectPlus LT and Microcom's $4,999 LANexpress 4000. The ConnectPlus LT provides all the basics at a terrific low price, while the LANexpress is a top-notch server with outstanding administrative control and up to a dozen 28.8Kbps Ethernet ports.

Little Box That Could

Emulex's ConnectPlus LT is the simplest solution for remote LAN access. It supports all forms of Ethernet networks as well as most popular protocols, including IPX, SPX, TCP/IP, and Apple Remote Access. Setup is effortless. Plug a network cable into the server (it's actually a small box about the size of a VHS tape), connect one or two modems or ISDN, and run the administrator software on any networked machine. The software then searches the network for the server and connected modems, and configures them appropriately.

ConnectPlus also includes Novell's IPX client software, so if you're running Novell's NetWare it's a complete solution; but if you're running on some other type of network, you'll have to provide your own remote-client software.

Keys to the Office: Microcom's LANexpress 4000 (bottom) and Emulex's ConnectPlus LT (top) remote servers let you access your company's network from the road. LANexpress 4000 costs $4,999 and provides enough power for large sites; ConnectPlus LT goes for $750 and is perfect for small organizations.

PICKS REMOTE LAN SERVERS

Simple remote LAN access at a low price	Emulex ConnectPlus LT
Powerful remote LAN access for large networks	Microcom LANexpress 4000

Larger sites that need extensive control and multiple simultaneous connections will find Microcom's LANexpress 4000 a good fit. It comes in several models to satisfy various network and port needs. As with ConnectPlus, you install the administration software on any networked machine and it finds and configures the server. But unlike ConnectPlus, setting up the LANexpress clients and administrator was a real challenge, and the manual wasn't helpful. When we finally got LANexpress up and running, however, we had no complaints. It handled several simultaneous calls without a hitch.

Powerful Connections

LANexpress's administration software, expressWatch, provides complete access control and traffic reports, but it's far from intuitive. The included entry-level client software works, but it's difficult to use. You'll probably want to upgrade to Microcom's advanced ($425 for 20 users) or premium ($850 for 20 users) client packages, which have better interfaces and more features. The premium version supports remote control.

For smaller businesses, Emulex's ConnectPlus LT is the simplest and most affordable remote LAN server available. Setup is easy, and because you supply your own modems, compatibility is ensured. If, on the other hand, you work for a large business that needs lots of power and tight security, LANexpress 4000 fits the bill. **JACK LYON**

FILEBOX

ConnectPlus LT

Usability ****
Technology ****
Verdict ****
A straightforward and affordable remote-access solution for small networks.

Competition: Shiva's NetModem has outstanding server and client software but only one serial port—and it costs $1,000 more.

$750 est. street price
Emulex Network Systems
(800) 590-5773, (206) 881-4065
Reader Service No. 651

LANexpress 4000

Usability ***
Technology
Verdict ****
Industrial-strength remote access for large networks.

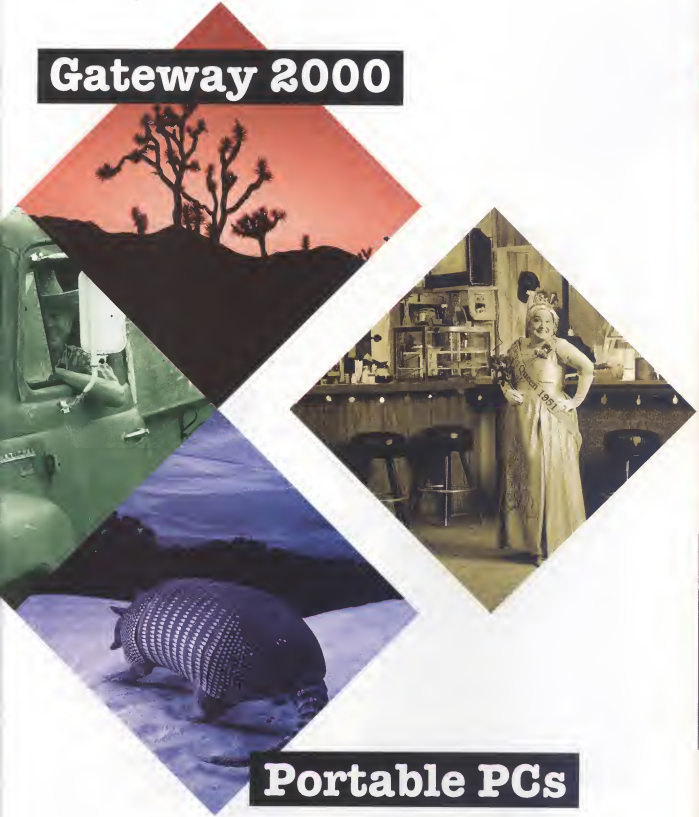
Competition: 3Com's AccessBuilder 4000 costs $500 less, but it lacks administrative control. Shiva's LanRover E Plus provides greater control but costs twice as much.

$4,999 est. street price for 4-port Ethernet; $7,999 for 8-port Ethernet
Microcom
(800) 822-8224, (617) 551-1000
Reader Service No. 652

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TOSELIO

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

Gateway 2000



Portable PCs

I needed out. My buddies in the programming lab were getting to me. So I tossed my Gateway Solo™ S120 Best Buy multimedia notebook into my pack and headed for the desert. Nothing like a little hot earth to clear the mind.

GATEWAY2000
S O L O

Man, I love this machine!

There I was. Miles from anywhere, just working away. Thinking — *man, I love this machine*! Everything I need, right at my fingertips. A powerful 120MHz Intel® Pentium® processor, active matrix SVGA color display, 16MB RAM, whopping 1.2GB hard drive, and CD-ROM drive — it's high-end desktop power in a portable PC.

Perched on a rock, jamming to my favorite tunes (thanks to the 16-bit sound stereo speakers and CD-ROM drive), I watched the moon begin its journey across the night sky.

Off in the distance I saw headlights and heard the whining of an engine begging for a tune-up. Soon a battered old truck screeched to a halt in front of me. Over the dull roar of honky-tonk music I heard, "Need a lift buddy?" Sure, why not.

"My name's Ned. And this here's Chuck." He gestured to the armadillo curled up next to him. "I'm in 'crete." 'Crete? "Yea, lots of opportunity in concrete. Spend a lot of time on the road. But I like it that way. Say you got yourself a pretty nifty Gateway 2000® notebook. Me too. Wouldn't make a move without Sally here," Ned smiled as he patted the Gateway Solo V75 notebook sitting on the dash. Sally? "That's what I call her, after a certain waitress in Tucson," Ned winked at me. "Sally's loaded. She has a 75MHz Pentium processor, 8MB RAM, 540MB hard drive, and CD-ROM drive." He winked at me again.

Gateway Solo notebooks are optimized for Microsoft Windows® 95.

Ned named his portable Sally.

"It has all the features I need while I'm on the road. Isn't that right Chuck?

EZ Pad™ pointing device for easy cursor navigation.

"I'm mighty fond of Gateway 2000. Best values in portable PCs around," smiled Ned. "And their portable line has something for everyone."

More c
more

The radio droned on as Ned, Chuck and I continued on our trek through the dark desert.

Armadillos like to have their heads rubbed. At least Chuck did. Up ahead I saw the neon sign of a roadhouse — a beacon in the darkness.

"I could use some grub. How 'bout you?" asked Ned as he pulled the truck into the dirt parking lot.

There she stood in all her glory. Tiara and satin dress shimmering beneath the fluorescent lights. "Next tour's in 15 minutes, honey," she said. Tour? "My name's Delilah, and I give the best moonlit desert tours in the West. Is that a Gateway Solo notebook?" she asked eyeing my portable.

mputing, places.

Gateway Solo models feature two integrated stereo speakers.

"I have a Gateway Liberty small notebook. It's packed with fabulous features like a 540MB removable hard drive, and it weighs a mere 4.2 pounds! Why, this glorious PC has won nearly as many awards as I have! And the best part," Delilah leaned in closer. "Its huge 10.4-inch color screen is dual-scan for extra privacy." I surpressed the urge to ask the Desert Queen about the secrets she was keeping from the world.

"Honey, the folks at Gateway 2000 are just great. Can you

The folks at Gateway 2000 are just great.

believe that each system gets 24-hour, seven-day-a-week telephone technical support? And their values just can't be beat," said Delilah with a far off look in her eyes. I had a feeling my adventures were just beginning.

For more computing, more places — call Gateway 2000 today.

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- 75MHz Intel Pentium Processor
- 8MB RAM
- Modular CD-ROM Drive
- 540MB Hard Drive
- MS Works 95
- Carrying Case

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- 90MHz Intel Pentium Processor
- 8MB RAM
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- Carrying Case

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- 16MB RAM
- Modular CD-ROM Drive
- 720MB Hard Drive
- MS Works 95
- Carrying Case

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S90 DELUXE

- 10.4" SVGA (800 x 600) Display
- 90MHz Intel Pentium Processor
- 16MB RAM
- Modular CD-ROM Drive
- 1.2GB Hard Drive
- MS Office 95, Professional Edition†
- Carrying Case

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S120 BEST BUY

- 10.4" SVGA (800 x 600) Display
- 120MHz Intel Pentium Processor
- 16MB RAM
- Modular CD-ROM Drive
- 1.2GB Hard Drive
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- Extra Li-ion Battery
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- Removable Hard Drive
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- Microsoft Windows 95**

DX4-100

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- 256K L2 Cache
- External Floppy Drive
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DX4-100 DELUXE

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- 540MB Hard Drive
- 256K L2 Cache
- External Floppy Drive
- MS Office 95, Professional Edition†

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- 720MB Hard Drive
- 256K L2 Cache
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- Desktop IR Module
- External Floppy Drive
- MS Office 95, Professional Edition†
- Liberty Leather Carrying Case

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***MS-DOS® 6.22 and MS Windows for Workgroups 3.11 available upon request.*

†MS Office 95, Professional Edition includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint® presentation graphics program, Schedule+, along with MS Access® database and Bookshelf® 95.

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Fortress® uninterruptible power systems stop this crime wave cold. With advanced features like Adaptive Power Tracking, Fortress—unlike some "UPS"—prevents any break in computer-grade power to your system.

As for violent crime, Fortress passed grueling tests to earn its UL 1449 badge for lightning and surge protection.

Fortress scores highest.
In the 1994 Reliability Ratings Survey, the BEST Fortress customer satisfaction/reliability score was higher than any other (UPS) vendor surveyed – 4.94 average rating on a 1-to-5 scale. All surveyed would buy BEST again.

(A "Double Lifetime" Warranty is standard.*)

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AND HERE

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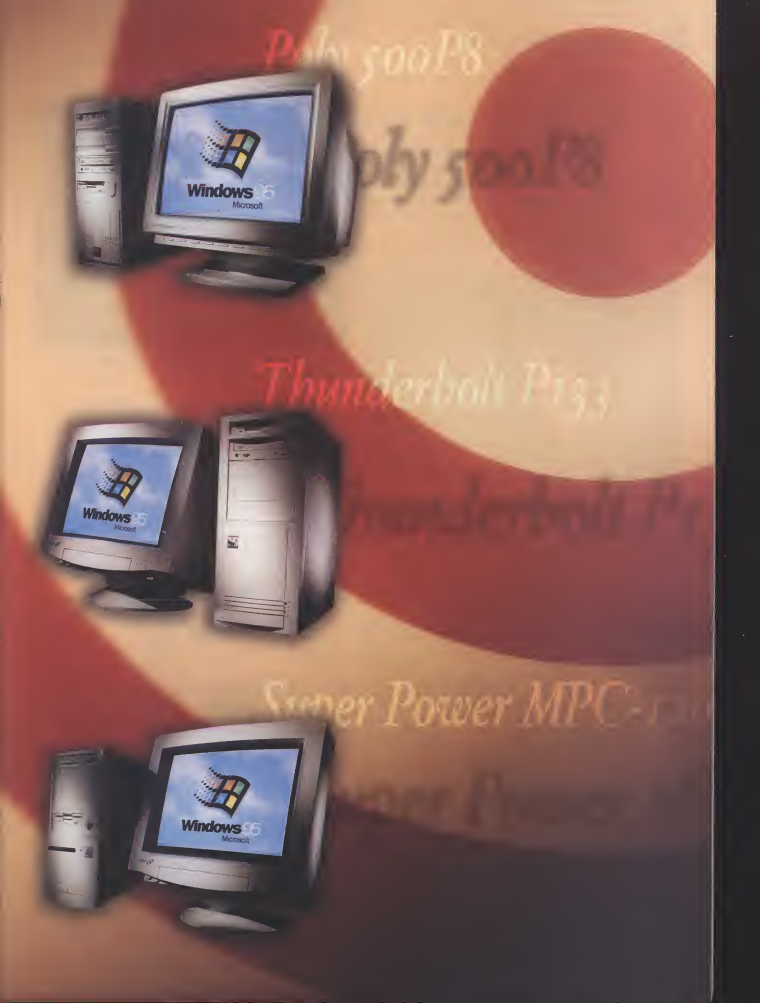
That's what we discovered when we went out to find the best direct bargain system we could buy. We set the minimum configurations high: a 100MHz or faster Pentium processor, 16MB of memory, a 1GB or larger hard drive, a 64-bit PCI graphics accelerator with 2MB of video memory (VRAM), a 17-inch monitor, a quad-speed

BY MARTY JEROME

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK JOHANN


Poly 500P8
Windows 95
Microsoft
Thunderbolt P133
Windows 95
Microsoft
Super Power MPC
Windows 95
Microsoft

CD-ROM drive, and Windows 95 preloaded. Anything else a vendor could fit in—sound card, speakers, modem, or software—was gravy.

We thought these high-flying specs would scare away quite a few manufacturers, but 19 systems qualified. If you read anything into this, it's that the price for 100MHz to 133MHz Pentium PCs has hit its sweet spot: All of the systems we received cost less than $3,000. The time to buy is *now*.

Application Performance Our testing turned up a few surprises. Did the titans of direct manufacturing—companies that have built enduring reputations on the performance of their systems—sweep our benchmark tests in customary fashion? Not this round.

To be sure, the offerings from Gateway 2000 and Dell Computer were top performers. In fact, Gateway's P5-120 scored nearly as high as the 133MHz Pentium systems and was the fourth-fastest performer overall. Similarly, Dell's 100MHz Dimension P100t outscored a couple of 120MHz systems.

But the top three performers were Tagram's Thunderbolt P133, Polywell's Poly 500P8, and Maximus's Magna Media. After them came Robotech's Cobra XLT, Royal Electronics' Ultra Media II-17, Hi-Tech USA's Super Power MPC-120, and Premio Express's Express Station. None of these are exactly household names, but they all turned in excellent numbers in our Winstone 96 benchmark test.

Overall Best: Polywell's Poly 500P8 offers stellar performance, documentation, and internal design.

The recipe for their success? Look to the basics: large L2 caches (most of which were pipelined), EDO RAM (in many systems), fast video accelerators, and speedy hard drives. In fact, an interesting trend turned up in our testing. After three years of system-performance equalization, subcomponents such as video accelerators and hard drives are once again brokering the difference between a fast PC and a slow one. Never mind the

Rating Bargain Systems

Product	Price	CPU	Graphics Accelerator	Sound Card/ Speakers	Monitor	Bundled Software	Performance* (Worst–Best)	Usability	Verdict
Poly 500P8 Polywell Computers (800) 899-1278 *Reader Service No. 656*	$2,848	133MHz Pentium	Diamond's Stealth 64	Yes/ Yes	Polywell's 17	Windows 95 CD, Creative Labs' multimedia kit software		Ingenious case design, outstanding manual.	★★★★★ Great performance, excellent usability.
Cobra XLT Robotech (800) 533-0633 *Reader Service No. 657*	$2,849	100MHz Pentium	Number Nine's Vision 330	Yes/ Yes	Data Display's 17	Windows 95 disks, Novell's Perfect Office 3.0, 100MB shareware		Poor case design, otherwise good usability.	★★★★ Fast 100MHz Pentium with good bundle.
Dimension P100t Dell Computer Corp. (800) 288-0550 *Reader Service No. 658*	$2,600	100MHz Pentium	S3's Trio 64 onboard chip set	Yes/ Yes	Dell's 17	Windows 95 CD, Windows 3.1, MS-DOS 6.2		Great case design and manuals, video tour at start-up.	★★★★ Fast 100MHz Pentium, excellent usability.
Magna Media Maximus Computers (800) 888-6294 *Reader Service No. 659*	$2,850	133MHz Pentium	Number Nine's Motion 531	Yes/ Yes	Mag's DX17F	Windows 95 CD, Microsoft's Money 95, Works 95, Encarta 95		Easy to upgrade, but manuals are mix and match.	★★★★ Great performer, includes modem and solid bundle.
P5-120 Gateway 2000 (800) 846-2000 *Reader Service No. 660*	$2,774	120MHz Pentium	STB's Power Graphics 64	No/ No	Gateway 2000's Vvitron 1776	Windows 95 CD, Microsoft's Office 95		Well-illustrated quick-start guide gets you going fast.	★★★★ Top-notch performance, but no audio.

*RELATIVE PERFORMANCE RATING IS BASED ON WINSTONE 96 BENCHMARKS

CPU. For example, Hi-Tech USA's 120MHz Super Power MPC-120 and Vektron's 133MHz Multimedia Ultimate were disappointingly slow, considering their processors' clock speeds, because of slow hard drives.

Video Performance PC video has been the wild card in system performance, not only because graphics accelerators keep getting faster, but also because several new memory technologies, including dedicated VRAM and Window RAM (WRAM), have appeared to spur video performance .

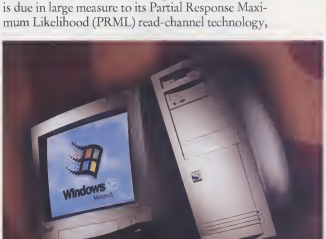
Top honors for video go to Tagram's Thunderbolt P133, which features Matrox's amazing MGA Millennium equipped with dual-ported WRAM. The Thunderbolt P133 outpaced its nearest competitors by almost 25 percent.

Vektron's Multimedia Ultimate, Hi-Tech USA's Super Power MPC-120, and Polywell's Poly 500P8—three of the five fastest systems in video performance—all use Diamond's Stealth 64 Video VRAM, a video card that has proved its speedy performance across a variety of applications. Maximus's Magna Media, third fastest in video performance, uses Number Nine's splendid Motion 531 card.

The systems that performed above average include Diamond's Stealth 64—USA Flex's Flex PT-120, Royal Electronics' Ultra Media II-17, and Expotech's Expo Pentium Home PC. Gateway's P5-120, outfitted with STB's Power Graphics 64, also did well.

Hard Drive Performance Other than the power supply, no PC subcomponent has remained as staid and unremarkable as the hard drive. Yes, capacities keep going up and prices keep going down, but regardless of the manufacturer, access times have hovered in the tight 14ms-to-18ms range for more than four years.

Until now. Quantum has ratcheted down that time to 12ms with its stunning new 1.08GB Fireball drive. In spite of the disconcerting imagery inspired by its name, the Fireball is the fastest Enhanced IDE (EIDE) drive you'll find. The impressive performance is due in large measure to its Partial Response Maximum Likelihood (PRML) read-channel technology,



Best Performer: Tagram's Thunderbolt P133 blazed through our benchmark performance tests.

Product	Price	CPU	Graphics Accelerator	Sound Card/ Speakers	Monitor	Bundled Software	Performance* (Worst–Best)	Usability	Verdict
QP5/100 SM-1 Quantex Microsystems (800) 787-8686 *Reader Service No. 661*	$2,799	100MHz Pentium	ATI's Mach 64	Yes/ Yes	Mag's DX17F	Windows 95 CD, Windows 3.1, Quicken, Novell's Perfect Office 3.0		Easy to install, includes Quick Setup guide.	★★★★ Generous package—all ready to go.
Super Power MPC-120 Hi-Tech USA (408) 262-8688 *Reader Service No. 662*	$2,699	120MHz Pentium	Diamond's Stealth 64	Yes/ Yes	Mag's DX17F	Windows 95 disks: Microsoft's Office 95, Encarta 95; CD sampler		Unimpressive documentation, ergonomic keyboard.	★★★★ Outstanding bundle, great overall value.
Thunderbolt P133 Tagram System Corp. (800) 624-7267 *Reader Service No. 663*	$2,845	133MHz Pentium	Matrox's MGA Millennium	Yes/ No	Mag's DX17F	Windows 95 CD		Poor case design, unorganized documentation.	★★★★ Fastest system, but mediocre design.
Expo Pentium Home PC Expotech Corp. (800) 215-3976 *Reader Service No. 664*	$2,843	100MHz Pentium	Diamond's Stealth 64	Yes/ Yes	CTX's 1765CD	Windows 95 CD, Novell's Perfect Works, Quicken, Compton's Encyclopedia 96		Difficult to upgrade, lacks system manual.	★★★ Generous bundle, average performance.
Flex PT-120 USA Flex (800) 672-3539 *Reader Service No. 665*	$2,850	120MHz Pentium	Diamond's Stealth 64	Yes/ Yes	CTX's 1765CD	Windows 95 CD, Talkshop, FaxWorks, Corel games		Excellent documentation, sensible case design.	★★★ Incredible bundle, but relatively poor performance.

*RELATIVE PERFORMANCE RATING IS BASED ON WINSTONE 96 BENCHMARKS

Continued on page 136

which lets it pack more data into a tighter area on hard-disk platters and transfer that data internally at faster speeds. It's quickly becoming an industry standard on SCSI drives, and will appear on more EIDE drives sooner than you think.

The Thunderbolt P133, Poly 500P8, Magna Media, and Ultra Media II-17, all of which use Quantum's Fireball drive, turned in the top hard-drive performance results. In fact, the seven fastest systems for drive performance all use this new drive. If you're searching for proof that the new PRML technology is a success, look no further.

Western Digital's Caviar 31200 drive, on the other hand, dragged down the overall performance of several systems that zipped through other benchmarks. Vektron's Multimedia Ultimate, Hi-Tech USA's Super Power MPC-120, and USA Flex's Flex PT-120, all of which feature fast 120MHz and 133MHz CPUs, ended up with midlevel Winstone results because of the Caviar 31200's mediocre speed.

While performance differences between various video cards and hard drives widened in the past year, performance differences between CD-ROM drives narrowed. Mind you, all the CD drives in this roundup performed well. But most benchmark results huddled together. There was little to distinguish one system from another, except for the top CD-ROM drive performer: Vektron's Multimedia Ultimate, which is outfitted with a Teac CD-56E six-speed mechanism, pulled well ahead of the pack. The second-place finisher in CD performance, Royal Electronics' Ultra Media II-17, also stood out, thanks to its Media Vision's 6X—the only other six-speed CD-ROM drive in this roundup.

The other top-performing CD drive was Toshiba's speedy XM-5302B quad-speed model, which comes

Best Bundle: Hi-Tech USA's Super Power MPC-120 comes with a sound card, speakers, and lots of software.

Rating Bargain Systems *Continued*

Product	Price	CPU	Graphics Accelerator	Sound Card/ Speakers	Monitor	Bundled Software	Performance* (Worst–Best)	Usability	Verdict
P5-100 MidWest Micro (800) 883-1463 *Reader Service No. 666*	$2,799	100MHz Pentium	ATI's WinTurbo	No/ No	MidWest Micro's 17	Windows 95 CD, Windows 3.11, MS-DOS 6.22, Microsoft's Office 95		Complete and well-organized documentation, easy setup.	★★★ Relatively slow performance, but good software bundle.
P100 Professional PerComp Microsystems (800) 856-6688 *Reader Service No. 667*	$2,799	100MHz Pentium	Diamond's Stealth 64	Yes/ Yes	PerComp's 17	Windows 95 CD, CompuServe, America Online		Easy to set up, but package doesn't include the system manual.	★★★ Middling performance, basic software bundle.
Express Station Premio Express (800) 677-6477 *Reader Service No. 668*	$2,699	100MHz Pentium	Number Nine's Motion 531	Yes/ Yes	Premio's 17	Windows 95 installed but disks not included		Cables tucked neatly, but SIMMs hard to access.	★★★ Average usability, decent performance.
Talon HS-100 Empac Int'l (510) 683-6800 *Reader Service No. 669*	$2,800	100MHz Pentium	Diamond's Stealth 64	Yes/ Yes	ADI's MicroScan 5EP/API	Windows 95 installed but disks not included		Components are very accessible, but documentation is incomplete.	★★★ Solid design, respectable performance.

Continued on page 140

*RELATIVE PERFORMANCE RATING IS BASED ON WINSTONE 96 BENCHMARKS

Diana Dahlgren

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- Discusses theoretical physics.
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with five other high-ranking CD systems, including PerComp's P100 Professional and Swan Technologies' PowerHouse Series.

The slowest systems in CD benchmarks? Polywell's Poly 500P8 and Robotech's Cobra XLT—systems that otherwise showed stellar performance. The Poly 500P8 comes with Sony's CDU75E, and Robotech uses Panasonic's 4Xi. Generally, these are drives to avoid.

Ease of Use Even the slowest systems in this roundup aren't exactly laggards. (And before you dismiss 100MHz models altogether, take a long look at the performance results for Dell's Dimension P100t and Royal Electronics' Ultra Media II-17 in the table, "Rating PC Systems.") But what about desktop civility? That is, how easy is it to get the system up and running, find help when you need it, grow the system with expansion cards or new drives, and put it to work?

Dell's Dimension P100t gets high marks for usability because of its excellent documentation. So do USA Flex's Flex PT-120, MidWest Micro's P5-100, and Austin Direct's PowerPlus 100. Manuals for Maximus's Magna Media could stand some work, but the machine is very easy to upgrade and troubleshoot. The Quick Start Guide for Gateway's P5-120 is a model of documentation that other makers should emulate.

But Polywell's Poly 500P8 takes top honors for usability, thanks to its coherent manuals and a clean case design that lets you add components easily.

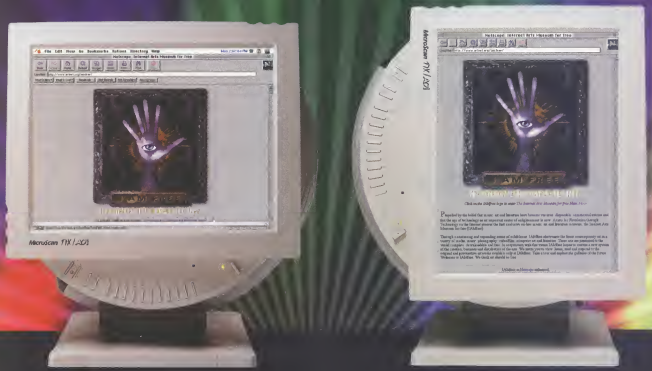
Best Usability: The interior design of Polywell's Poly 500P8 is incredibly clean, making it very easy to upgrade.

Given the Poly 500P8's extraordinary performance and the company's reliable service and support, this system is our overall favorite—if only by a hair. The Magna Media and Thunderbolt P133 are also excellent choices. For that matter, don't settle on a machine before considering Dell's Dimension P100t and Gateway's P5-120. Despite their slower CPUs, they pack more punch than you'd expect.

Rating Bargain Systems *Continued*

Product	Price	CPU	Graphics Accelerator	Sound Card/ Speakers	Monitor	Bundled Software	Performance* (Worst–Best)	Usability	Verdict
Ultra Media II-17 Royal Electronics (800) 486-0008 *Reader Service No. 670*	$2,850	100MHz Pentium	Diamond's Stealth 64	Yes/ Yes	Princeton's Ultra 17 Plus	Windows 95 CD, Windows 3.1, Novell's Perfect Office 3.0		Messy documentation, confusing setup.	✱✱✱ Decent package and good bundle, but tough to set up.
Multimedia Ultimate Vektron Int'l (800) 725-0026 *Reader Service No. 671*	$2,850	133MHz Pentium	Diamond's Stealth 64	Yes/ No	ADI's MicroScan 5EP/API	Windows 95 installed but disks not included		Upgrade is difficult, third-party manuals only.	✱✱ Disappointing performance for 133MHz Pentium.
PowerHouse Series Swan Technologies (800) 446-2506 *Reader Service No. 672*	$2,849	100MHz Pentium	STB's Power-Graphic 64	No/ No	Sampo's Alpha 17mx	Windows 95 installed but disks not included		Awkward case design.	✱✱ Stingy bundle lacks sound card and software.
PowerPlus 100 Austin Direct (800) 752-1577 *Reader Service No. 673*	$2,850	100MHz Pentium	ATI's Mach 64	No/ No	KFC's 17	Windows 95 disks		Accessible components, excellent documentation.	✱✱ Good usability, but sluggish performance.
Quin-54/P100 DTK Computer (800) 289-2385 *Reader Service No. 674*	$2,790	100MHz Pentium	Tseng Labs' ET4000	Yes/ Yes	ADI's MicroScan 5EP/API	Windows 95 installed but disks not included		Messy construction inside case.	✱✱ Relatively slow system with poor usability.

*RELATIVE PERFORMANCE RATING IS BASED ON WINSTONE 96 BENCHMARKS



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Value by Phone

If you're in the market for a custom system that will give you the most performance for your dollar, you'll find that some of the best bargains are available direct. Even the big names like Dell Computer and Gateway 2000 offer excellent packages at great prices. But the winners in our performance and usability tests came from lesser-known companies like Polywell, Maximus, and Tagram. Polywell's Poly 500P8 system, in particular, impressed us with its superior performance and shrewd design.

Of course, to those who have bought systems from direct manufacturers in the past, top-drawer performance and high usability are no surprise. But what about these legendary bargains? Exactly how much does your dollar buy?

Among performance and usability winners, Gateway's P5-120 provides an excellent software bundle that includes a Windows 95 CD and Microsoft's Office for Windows 95. But curiously, its $2,774 price doesn't include a sound card or speakers. On the other hand, Maximus's $2,850 Magna Media system features 16-bit audio and an average set of speakers, plus a modem and a good software bundle.

Hi-Tech USA's $2,699 Super Power MPC-120, with a 120MHz Pentium, offers one of the best all-around values. It comes bundled with reasonably good speakers and Windows 95; Microsoft's Encarta, Money, and Works; and a CD sampler. Compare that with Swan's $2,849 PowerHouse, which features a 100MHz Pentium, and lacks audio, speakers, and applications software of any kind—yet costs $150 more.

If you need a fax modem, USA Flex's Flex PT-120, PerComp's P100, and Royal Electronics' Ultra Media II-17 all include one in their quoted prices. Nice-quality Altec-Lansing speakers come with Quantex's QP5/100 SM-1 and Dell's Dimension P100t.

Of course, system features, software bundles, and prices are moving targets, so you won't really know how far your dollars will go until you pick up the phone. Once you do, we think you'll be pleasantly surprised by the choices.

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		Service and Support	Tagram Thunderbolt P133
	Usability	Bundled Extras	Polywell Poly 500P8
		Service and Support	Gateway P5-120
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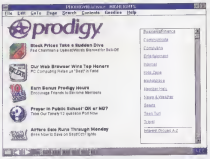

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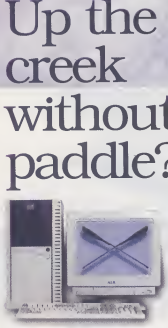

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The Direct 60

The lowdown on top mail-order deals

Convenience counts for a lot. And when it comes to buying a computer, nothing is more convenient than picking up the phone and ordering direct. True, you can't try out the system before you buy it, but you can have it delivered right to your doorstep—and you don't have to worry about parking. Plus, companies that deal direct often have more products in stock and a wider selection, and they give you the option of custom-building your dream PC. Many direct vendors also offer some of the best technical support around—where else can you reach a live tech-support person 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?

Of course, the quality of services varies widely. Some dealers offer unlimited free phone calls and BBS support, and extend generous, money-back guarantees; others limit their support to business hours, impose restocking fees, or lack online support. We've compiled the operating policies of over 60 manufacturers that sell computers direct, and rated them based on the amount and kinds of services they offer. Use it as a guide to zero in on companies that provide the support you need. And check out our tips for getting the best deal possible.

BY BOB O'DONNELL

Rating Direct Vendors

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Broadax Systems (800) 872-4547 fax, (818) 442-4527 *Reader Service No. 687*	Notebooks, portable and industrial rack-mount computers	15	10%	M–F, 11:30 a.m.–8:30 p.m.	BBS, (818) 274-6971	★★★★
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Comtrade (800) 969-2123 fax, (818) 369-1479 *Reader Service No. 690*	Complete systems for home and office	30	None	M–F, 10:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m.; Sa, 11:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.	BBS, (818) 961-6098	★★★★
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Legend Micro (800) 366-8333 fax, (216) 497-3156 *Reader Service No. 704*	Complete systems for home and office	30	None	M–F, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.	Web, www.industry.net/legend; BBS, (216) 497-1572	★★★★
Maximus Computers (800) 888-6294 fax, (818) 357-9140 *Reader Service No. 705*	Complete systems for home and office, notebooks	30	None	M–Sa, noon–9:00 p.m.	Internet, maximus_computers@msn.com; BBS, (818) 357-9790	★★★★
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PC's Compleat (800) 669-4727 fax, (800) 669-8329 *Reader Service No. 715*	Notebooks, desktops, multimedia peripherals, servers	30	None	M–F, 24 hours; Sa–Su, 8:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.	Web, www.ocm.com/pcs compleat/	★★★★
Polywell Computers (800) 999-1278 fax, (415) 583-1974 *Reader Service No. 716*	Complete systems for home and office	30	10%	M–F, 10:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m.	Internet, ftp.polywell.com; Web, www.polywell.com	★★★★
Premio Express (800) 834-4558 fax, (818) 336-4374 *Reader Service No. 717*	Complete systems for home and office	30	15% after 30 days	M–F, 10:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.; Sa, 1:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.	BBS, (818) 330-9749	★★★★
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Robotech (800) 533-0633 fax (801) 565-0680 *Reader Service No. 721*	Complete systems for home, office, government, and schools	30	1%	M–F, 11:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.	Internet, ftp.xmission.com; Web, www.xmission.com/~Robotech; BBS, (801) 565-9359; fax-back, (801) 565-0645 ext. 157	★★★★
Royal Electronics (800) 486-0008 fax (818) 330-2717 *Reader Service No. 722*	Complete systems for home and office	30	None	M–F, noon–9:00 p.m.; Sa, 1:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.	None	★★★★
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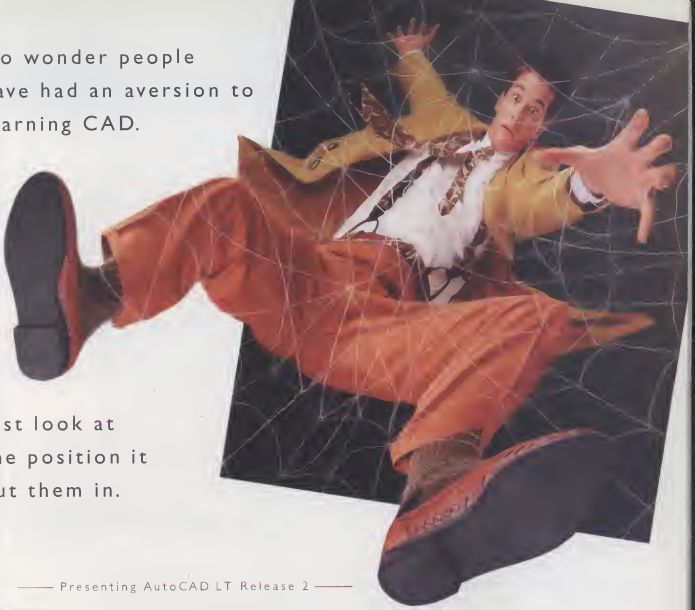

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Tagram System Corp. (800) 824-7267 fax, (714) 258-3220 *Reader Service No. 726*	Complete high-end systems for home and office	30	None	M–F, noon–9:00 p.m.; Sa, noon–5:00 p.m.	BBS, (714) 258-7118	★★★★
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Tredex California (800) 899-4100 fax, (310) 301-0313 *Reader Service No. 728*	New and used systems, printers	10	10%–15%	M–F, 11:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.	Web, www.tredex.com	★★★★
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USA Flex (800) 872-3539 fax (708) 351-7204 *Reader Service No. 730*	Complete systems for home and office, peripherals	30	Varies	M–Su, 24 hours	BBS, (708) 359-6048	★★★★
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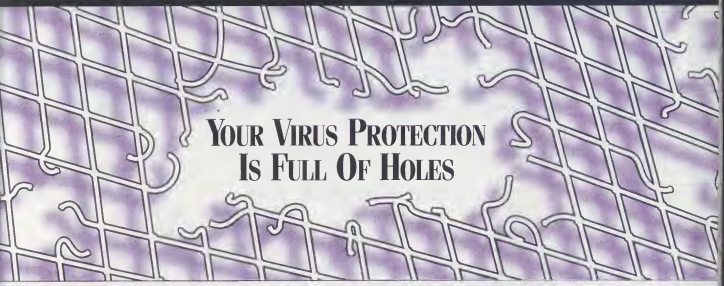

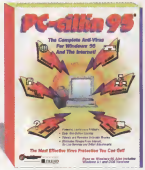

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Easy, One-Button Virus Pattern Updates	YES	NO	NO
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Includes Windows 3.1 & DOS Versions	YES	NO	NO
No. of Compressed File Types Scanned	6	2	1

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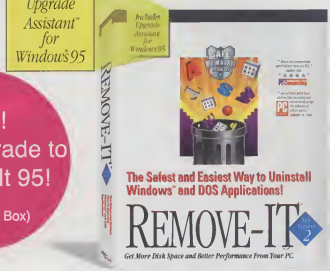

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THE FIRST WAVE OF Windows Data

SYNOPSIS

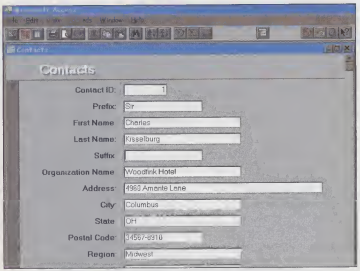
REPORT CARD: *How the databases compare in key tasks.* **164**

USABILITY FOCUS: *Access vs. Approach.* **168**

DECISION MAKER: *Choosing the right database.* **170**

Let's be honest. For many of us, databases have always been daunting. While we can work wonders with word processors and spreadsheets, building a database often means hiring a consultant or farming out a programming job. But a new, friendlier generation of Windows 95 database applications promises to change all that. To see if they've fulfilled that promise, *PC Computing*'s Usability Labs put prerelease versions of four first-generation Windows 95 databases through their paces: Microsoft's Access for Windows 95, Lotus's Approach 96, Borland's Paradox 7, and Claris's FileMaker Pro 3.0.

Only Access and Approach were close enough to final release to allow for full-blown



Microsoft Access: Table Wizard templates, such as this contacts database, help get you up and running in minutes.

95 bases

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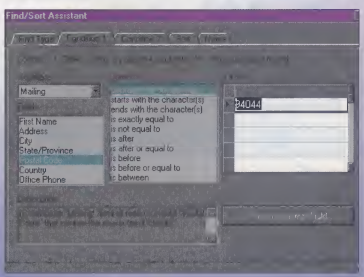
BY JEFF DAVIS

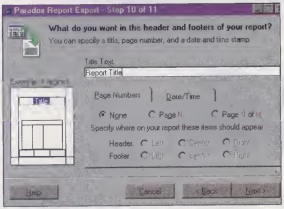
usability testing (see "Access 95: Better Help, Consistent Interface," page 168). But all four products offer a sample of what you can expect in a 32-bit world.

Generally, the news is good—there's something to like about each of these upgrades. Access's tight integration with other applications and its shrewd use of Wizards, for example, are standouts. Likewise with Approach's ability to create and edit forms. Paradox's ObjectPAL language will please many developers even if other features are lacking. Access, Approach, and Paradox all provide external links via Open Database Connectivity (ODBC) and Structured Query Language (SQL). And FileMaker fans will



Lotus Approach: The Find/Sort Assistant lets you compose queries in no time, even if the syntax is unfamiliar.

welcome its new relational features. When we concluded testing, we found that none of these products offers enough improvements to make loyal users want to switch brands, but all of them offer enough to make upgrading worthwhile. The tougher choice will be for users who are new to database software. Whichever group you belong to, here's your chance to see what each product offers.



Borland Paradox: Although the Report Expert makes it easy to create basic reports, the results are lackluster and customization is difficult.

Access for Windows 95 Microsoft's Access eked out a victory in overall productivity thanks in part to its consistent interface. Nevertheless, our tests show that novice users may have trouble figuring out where to start. Power users will find plenty to like, however. Sophisticated form-creation tools let you develop layouts in a variety of styles. The Import Wizard walks you through the process of importing data, though not as elegantly as do the Assistants in Lotus's Approach 96.

Access includes a variety of tools for finding data, although deciding which one to use can be confusing. If you're not quite up to speed on relational theory, use the Table Analyzer Wizard to split flat-file data into relational tables with little fuss. The Report Wizard automates the creation of basic reports, but customizing them is less than intuitive.

The integration with other applications is impressive. OLE 2.0 lets you drag and drop Excel spreadsheet data into a database, which automatically creates new tables to hold it. Access now shares the spell-checker and AutoCorrect features in Microsoft's Word. Access can also perform mail-merge functions with Word, and can even be used as a report generator for Excel, though both processes are still a bit awkward and devour system resources.

REPORT CARD DATABASE USABILITY IN KEY TASKS

PC Computing's usability testers evaluated five different operations: arranging tables, importing data, building queries, creating forms, and compiling reports. They added and edited tables, imported text files, created data-entry forms, performed routine data-analysis tasks, and tested each product's report editor and mail-merge functions. In each category we gave check marks to the applications that achieved a satisfactory level of usability. Since all of the products were prerelease versions, none qualified for *PC Computing*'s Usability Seal of Approval.

Arranging Tables

Microsoft Access 95	Lotus Approach 96	Borland Paradox 7	Claris FileMaker Pro
✔			

Smooth Start: Access's Database window offers elegance and consistency in handling tables and other database objects. Approach, Paradox, and FileMaker Pro keep tables as separate databases. Testers found this confusing because editing a table is unlike editing other database objects. And in Approach and Paradox, the commands for these operations are relatively obscure.

Importing Data

Microsoft Access 95	Lotus Approach 96	Borland Paradox 7	Claris FileMaker Pro
	✔		✔

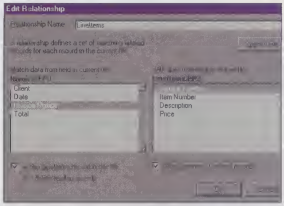
Easy Entry: Approach sets the standard for importing data, offering the ability to easily map fields and options for appending or updating data in a table. Although FileMaker Pro lets you only append data, it matches Approach in flexibility and ease of use. Access and Paradox also provide Wizard-like assistance, but neither handles field mapping as well as Approach.

Microsoft's Access brings improved usability and some outstanding features to Windows 95, although there's still room for improvement.

Approach 96 Lotus has improved Approach's overall ease of use as well, but it still achieved only moderate ratings in productivity and satisfaction among less-experienced users. Approach's help system was also less effective than Access's.

Approach does well with most basic database operations. Creating and editing forms is easy, and a variety of predefined styles are included. The Find Assistant lets you define and save custom queries with ease, and the Import Assistant absolutely shines in terms of usability. Like Access, however, Approach stumbles badly when it comes to compiling reports. Assistants help with simple reports, but the editor is awkward to use, and customizing reports is confusing.

Newcomers will appreciate the friendly—if not always consistent—interface and some well-designed features, but Approach doesn't quite match Access's feature set. Approach's interface is also less flexible than it could be. Unlike Access, it offers no central database window. Tabs across the main window provide one-click access to forms and reports, but objects can quickly clutter the window. You can create tables and databases from templates, but there are no step-by-step customization options, as there are in Access. Approach's competitive pricing ($105 list) makes it worth a look, however.



Claris FileMaker Pro: While earlier versions generated only flat-file databases, Claris finally added relational features in version 3.0.

Paradox 7 Many features we saw in the early beta release of Borland's Paradox 7 are similar to those in Microsoft's Access—including Experts, a central database window, and a programming language. Sadly, most of these features are less flexible

Building Queries

Microsoft Access 95	Lotus Approach 96	Borland Paradox 7	Claris FileMaker Pro
	✔	✔	

Fast Lookup: Although all four products fell somewhat short in this category, Approach and Paradox earned acceptable marks. Approach's Find Assistant was easy to use, but didn't always give enough feedback. Paradox's filters are also simple, but the Query Editor's interface is obtuse. Access simply overwhelms the user with options; FileMaker Pro offers only one.

Creating Forms

Microsoft Access 95	Lotus Approach 96	Borland Paradox 7	Claris FileMaker Pro
✔	✔		

Stylish Structure: While Access and Approach both make generating forms a breeze, Access has a broader range of styles. Paradox provides some unique tools for incorporating data from multiple tables, but the canned forms are unattractive and difficult to customize. FileMaker Pro is restricted to very basic styles and a limited array of editing tools.

Compiling Reports

Microsoft Access 95	Lotus Approach 96	Borland Paradox 7	Claris FileMaker Pro

Interface Flaws: No winners here. Only Paradox offers a clear means of creating summary calculations, but other customizations were difficult. While Approach has a mail-merge feature, importing files for merging seemed impossible. And although FileMaker Pro and Access offer a friendly report-design mode, none of the products provides an intuitive interface.

than their counterparts in either Approach or Access.

Paradox stores each database object as a separate file. The Project Viewer lets you view all the objects associated with a given project. Switching between projects requires a change of working directories. Although easy to edit, the default forms created with Paradox's Form Expert are unattractive. Paradox does offer some nifty tools for creating forms that incorporate information from multiple tables. The Filter button is a quick way to perform basic searches, but the query editor is not as easy to use as those in Approach or Access.

As with its rivals, Paradox's report generator was a disappointment. It handled summary calculations better than the competition did, but customization was difficult and the default reports were rather dreary.

Paradox supports the robust ObjectPAL language and offers an Object Explorer, which follows the object-oriented–programming paradigm—an environment application developers like. Less-experienced users may find the program awkward.

FileMaker Pro 3.0 With version 3.0, Claris's FileMaker Pro—previously only a flat-file database application—finally adds relational functions. It also has a number of other unique features, such as multiuser support (no dedicated file or database server needed), a client-server version, and cross-platform compatibility. But because it originated as a Macintosh application, its interface might feel odd to longtime Windows users.

Unless you have cross-platform needs or FileMaker experience on the Mac, you're not likely to feel at home with FileMaker Pro's interface—it's less consistent and less intuitive than Access's. Its form-creation tools are simple to use but rudimentary when compared with those of Approach or Access. There's no spreadsheet-like table view, nor will you find helpful Wizards or Assistants. The Find command lets you search for data by filling in a form, but there is no query assistant or editor, nor is there an easy way to save a search. FileMaker also lacks a serious mail-merge facility. And the report generator, although more understandable than Approach's, has severe limitations.

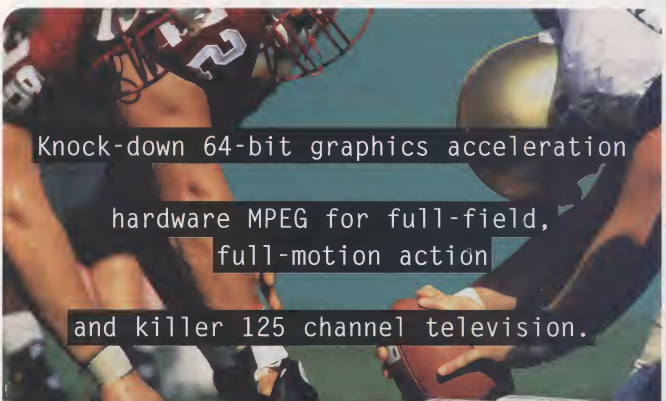
Time to Switch? If you're looking for a radical departure in the Windows 95 version of your favorite database application, you're in for a disappointment. While each program has improved, weaknesses remain, particularly in usability. Programmers and power users will find plenty to like in Borland's Paradox, but novices may be overwhelmed. Cross-platform shops will be drawn instinctively to FileMaker Pro.

For the vast majority of people who need an all-purpose relational database, Microsoft's Access and Lotus's Approach are both good choices. Access scored slightly higher in usability tests, but both products simplify creating and managing databases. Since each is included in a suite from the respective vendors—Microsoft's Office and Lotus's SmartSuite—your ultimate decision could depend on your choice of word-processing and spreadsheet applications.

Rating Windows 95 Databases

Product	Price*	Can Create Stand-alone Executables	Support for ODBC/ODBC32/OSI	OLE 2.0 Attributes	Bi-directional Synchronization	Verdict
Access for Windows 95 Microsoft Corp. (800) 426-9400 *Reader Service No. 747*	$339	Yes**	Yes/ Yes/ Yes	Yes	Yes	★★★★ The overall winner by a slim margin. Powerful form-creation and programming tools. Smooth interface. A few usability flaws.
Approach 96 Lotus Development Corp. (800) 343-5414 *Reader Service No. 748*	$105 list	No	Yes/ Yes/ Yes	Yes	No	★★★★ Easy to create forms and queries. Excellent importing tools. Some interface inconsistencies.
Paradox 7 Borland Int'l (800) 233-2444 *Reader Service No. 749*	$299	No	No/ Yes/ Yes	Yes	No	★★★ An effective tool for power users, but not quite as friendly for the average user. Not for novices.
FileMaker Pro 3.0 Claris Corp. (800) 544-8554 *Reader Service No. 750*	$199	Yes	No/ No/ No	Yes***	No	★★ Lacks common Windows interface, but has unique sharing and network options.

*ESTIMATED STREET PRICE UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE **WITH OPTIONAL ACCESS DEVELOPER'S TOOLKIT ***OLE 2.0 CONTAINER ONLY



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Stealth64 Video 2201	2MB DRAM
Stealth64 Video 2121TV	1MB (upgradable to 2MB) DRAM
Stealth64 Video 2201TV	2MB DRAM
Controller	S3 Trio64V+
Vertical refresh	Up to 120Hz
Max resolution	1280 x 1024
Bus type	PCI
Optional hardware	MPEG Video Player 1100 daughtercard DTV 1100 TV tuner card—2121, 2201
Software.	Video for Windows OCI Support Software MPEG playback for Windows® 95 and Windows® 3.1

Various software drivers and Video CODECs available
Some models available in VLB.

"Diamond's performance may in fact justify changing your purchasing decision from 'whether Diamond?' to 'which Diamond?'"
-PC Magazine, 12/5/95

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Stealth64 Video 2201XL
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Access 95: Better

A database application packed with features that power users need can't be easy enough for their untrained coworkers, right? So says conventional wisdom. But both Microsoft's Access for Windows 95 and Lotus's Approach 96 are out to disprove this assumption. By shortening the learning curve while providing powerful, high-end features, each is intended to be the only database your office will ever need. Is it possible?

To find out, *PC Computing's* Usability Labs assembled a group of readers to evaluate near-final versions of Access and Approach. Each of the testers had extensive experience with Windows 3.11 and had previously used spreadsheets for managing data. None of them had used a relational database before.

Our testers were disappointed with both products. While they felt they could be productive with either one, they also felt Access and Approach were marred by some clumsy features.

Microsoft Access 95

Although some novice users failed to grasp the purpose of Access's initial Database window, most of them quickly adapted to the unfamiliar terminology. Access's online help system provided a good overview of the program's functions, but some testers felt that it was not sufficiently detailed on specific tasks and operations. With a little trial and error, though, testers overcame their initial uncertainty and found it easy to create tables and forms with Access's helpful Wizards.

Editing existing tables also proved easy. One tester said it was "a piece of cake." Productivity and satisfaction scores were high in both creating and editing forms. Access's Autoform Wizard let testers generate new data-entry forms quickly and easily. Modifying the forms was equally simple using a drag-and-drop interface.

But scores dropped when testers tried to find data. Testers were faced with too many options: Query Wizard, Filter by Form, Filter by Selection, and Advanced Filter Sort. Testers had difficulty deciding which to use. Once they selected a method, coming up with the correct search-criteria syntax also proved to be a challenge, but a right-mouse-button click gave them the help they needed.

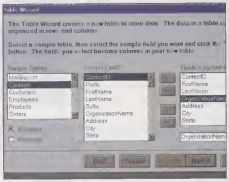
Unfortunately, when it came to reporting, testers found the toolbar unintuitive and the help system lacking. Unlike their experience with tables and forms, the trial-and-error method was less effective when working with reports. Productivity and satisfaction scores both slumped in this area. Access promises easy integration with Word and Excel, but some testers found switching between applications frustrating and had trouble understanding how to apply the advice offered by the online help.

Lotus Approach 96

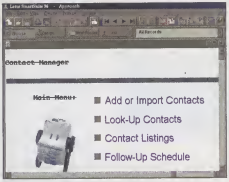
Access was the overall productivity winner, although it beat Approach by only a slim margin. There are plenty of new features to rave about in Approach, despite a few shortcomings. As with its Windows 3.x version, Approach 96 sets the standard for ease and power when it comes to importing data. Testers not only succeeded in incorporating new data into the database, they also enjoyed the step-by-

SIDE BY SIDE HOW ACCESS AND APPROACH COMPARE

Creating Tables



Access: The Table Wizard allowed users to create a contacts database table using the fields they selected from the template.



Approach: When using a SmartMaster Contacts template to create a database table, users wondered where to go next.

> "Overall, I enjoyed working with Access for Windows 95. I would use this database application again in the future."
>
> PRODUCT MANAGER

Help, Consistent Interface

step process. Likewise, creating and editing forms yielded few problems.

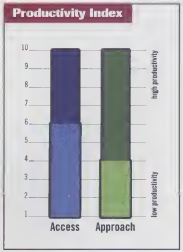
Approach received relatively low productivity marks overall, but better attention to detail would have earned the product a higher score. The Form Letter feature, for example, offers a simple yet powerful means to merge database information and text. Unfortunately, a simple design oversight tripped up this feature and left users frustrated: It lacks the ability to easily incorporate form letters created in another program, such as a word processor.

When it came to handling tables, testers found the program's interface confusing, largely because Approach requires that each table be created as a separate file via the File menu (most looked under the Create menu). The Add Field and Field Definition commands also evoked confusion because of ambiguity in editing table definitions. Even when testers successfully added fields to a table definition, they were frustrated that Approach did not automatically incorporate the new fields into database forms. Eventually, a little trial and error got the job done—but it cost Approach some points in productivity.

Finding data with Approach was simple. The large Find button was easy to locate, and the Find Assistant made creating queries relatively simple. Those who were unfamiliar with the syntax, however, found little help available. While Approach received a higher productivity score for its searching tools than did Access, there is clearly room for improvement.

Approach offers a Report Assistant (like the Report Wizard in Access) that makes it easy to create basic reports. As with Access, customizing reports in Approach frustrated usability testers. They had difficulties adding cover pages and performing summary calculations.

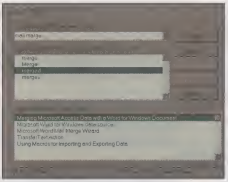
Close Call: Access 95 has a slight edge over Approach 96. *PC Computing's* Productivity Index takes into account user satisfaction, the number of tasks successfully completed, the effectiveness of each application's help system, and the testers' overall choice.



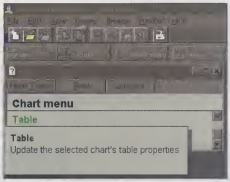
The representation of the report in the Design view was hard to decipher, and it was unclear how to view a report once it was designed.

While both Access and Approach have high and low points, satisfaction among our testers was often a product of each person's working habits and familiarity with specific terminology. Overall, it's clear that databases haven't yet reached their peak in productivity.

Help Function



Access: A search for "mail merge" yielded five entries in online help. Two of the topics were what the user was after.



Approach: While creating a table, one user got this terse note after choosing Table, Command from the help index.

> "Creating a mailing in Access was frustrating but after reading the online help, I successfully mail-merged letters."
>
> CORPORATE ADMINISTRATOR

Close Contenders

When it comes to Windows 95 databases, Microsoft's Access and Lotus's Approach are the clear leaders. The good news is that the Windows 95 version of both products has made significant strides in usability. Newcomers can be fairly productive with either of them, and power users can find all the tools they need. The bad news is that, despite improvements, both still need more work and lack adequate reporting tools.

Wizards in Microsoft's Access automate tedious database tasks and provide excellent customizability (except in the case of report generation). Managing database objects is easy with Access's clean and consistent interface, and the search tools are powerful, if a bit confusing. If only Microsoft would improve Access's reporting tools—which clearly lag behind the program's other features—the product would shine. Nevertheless, Access offers the best balance between features and productivity for the average database user.

Lotus's Approach, on the other hand, offers a simpler interface, which makes it a good choice for novices. Features such as the Import Assistant set the standard for database ease-of-use. However, while some of its individual features are outstanding, Approach's interface lacks the consistency of Access's. Approach is also missing some of the more helpful features of Access, such as AutoCorrect and the Table Wizard. Although still among the best database programs, Approach lost its position as the clear and undisputed leader.

If you're already using an earlier version of either of these products, you'll certainly want to upgrade to the 32-bit release. If you're choosing your first database product, however, both Access and Approach deserve consideration. Ultimately, your best choice for Windows 95 databases may be the product that comes bundled in your business software suite, since integration with word processors and spreadsheets is important. Sticking with just one suite of products assures a common interface among them, and will likely result in greater productivity.

JEFF DAVIS *is a freelance writer as well as a network and database consultant in California.*

DECISION MAKER CHOOSE THE RIGHT **DATABASE** FOR YOUR BUSINESS

1 Choose the factor that's most important.	2 Choose the next most important factor.	3 What else is important?	4 For your needs, the best product to buy is . . .
Usability	Features	Customizability	Microsoft Access
		Programmability	Microsoft Access
	Price	Customizability	Lotus Approach
		Programmability	Microsoft Access
Features	Usability	Customizability	Microsoft Access
		Programmability	Microsoft Access
	Price	Customizability	Microsoft Access
		Programmability	Microsoft Access
Price	Usability	Customizability	Lotus Approach
		Programmability	Lotus Approach
	Features	Customizability	Microsoft Access
		Programmability	Microsoft Access

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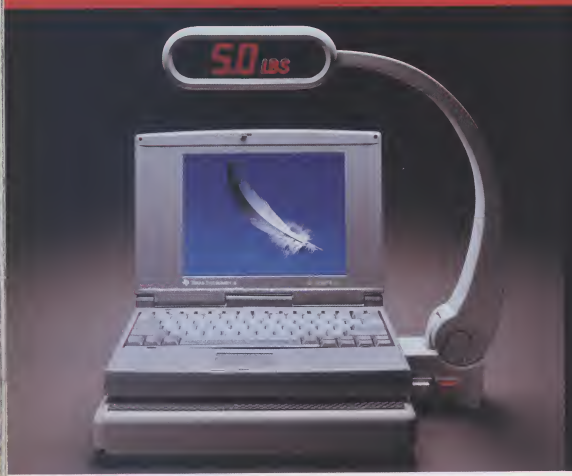

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Sound Advice

Hot cards. Killer speakers. Turn it up to 11!

Listen up! You don't have to settle for the tinny sound card that came with your PC. Plug into the new generation of Windows 95 sound cards and speakers, and you can take multimedia to the next level. Not only do these new 16-bit sound cards offer Plug and Play support for easy installation, they also include 3-D sound and other effects that add stunning realism to multimedia presentations, games, and CD-ROM titles.

PC Computing Labs technicians tested the first six Plug and Play wavetable sound cards to hit the market: Creative Labs' Sound Blaster AWE32 PnP, Ad Lib's ASB 3D Wave Pro, Ensoniq's Soundscape Elite, Diamond's Ultra Kit 8000, Orchid's NuSound PnP 32, and TeleVideo's TeleMedia Windows 95 Companion Kit with WaveImpact32. The TeleMedia Windows 95 Companion Kit and the Ultra Kit 8000 sound cards are sold only through multimedia kits, but the others are available separately.

Thanks to their support for Windows 95's Plug and Play, all of the cards have vastly improved usability. We were listening to music minutes after ripping the shrink-wrap off their boxes.

Sound Off All of the cards we tested include Sound Blaster–compatible FM synthesis as well as a wavetable synthesizer for playing back the standard MIDI files used as sound tracks in games, multimedia titles, and music software. Wavetable synthesizers generate sound quality superior to FM synthesizers because they play back short samples, or digital recordings, of real instruments instead of generating synthetic sounds.

The digital samples are typically stored in dedicated ROM, and some newer sound cards offer ROM add-on modules for loading in additional samples. A few cards also include RAM for loading custom samples. Usually, the more memory a card has, the better the sound quality.

More memory isn't a guarantee of better sound quality, however; the fidelity of the original recordings also influences what you hear. In fact, our top pick, Creative Labs'

Pump Up the Volume: Creative Labs' Sound Blaster AWE32 PnP sound card and Cambridge SoundWorks' speakers turn your PC into a topflight stereo.

PHOTOGRAPH BY FRED STIMSON

BY S. JAE YANG

Reviews: Putting Sound Cards to the Test

Sound Blaster AWE32 PnP, comes with only 1MB of sound ROM in its standard configuration. Most of the other cards include at least 2MB.

To test audio reproduction we asked a jury of listeners to rate different 16-bit, CD-quality digital-audio files, and MIDI sequences. All of the cards played back the digital-audio files with excellent fidelity, but there were differences among the cards when we played the MIDI sequences through the wavetable synthesizers.

In the wavetable-synthesis tests our sound jury didn't think any of the cards was a standout performer on the MIDI files we used, but the Soundscape Elite and the ASB 3D Wave Pro were the liveliest of the bunch. Unfortunately, both produced audible background noise. The Sound Blaster AWE32 PnP's reproduction was good, but not as realistic as the Soundscape Elite or the ASB 3D Wave Pro cards. However, the Sound Blaster's audio was more pleasant because it didn't generate much hissing.

The NuSound PnP 32 generated a fairly clean sound, but it wasn't very lively, while both the Ultra Kit 8000's and the TeleMedia Windows 95 Companion Kit's cards sounded unrealistic and mechanical. The Windows 95 Companion Kit's problem was compounded by annoying background noise.

We also tested the sound cards by recording sample audio with 8-bit resolution at an 11kHz recording rate—a setting commonly used for multimedia authoring—and then played it back. The sound-quality winner was the Sound Blaster AWE32 PnP, followed by Ensoniq's Soundscape Elite and Diamond's Ultra Kit 8000. Playback from Ad Lib's ASB 3D Wave Pro, Orchid's NuSound PnP 32, and TeleVideo's TeleMedia Windows 95 Companion Kit, on the other hand, suffered from hissing and background noise.

3-D Surround Sound Many of these cards are also equipped to handle audio effects, such as reverberation, or echo, which greatly improves the overall realism of the synthesized sound. The most innovative new effect is 3-D surround sound, which creates a larger audio field from a single pair of speakers. None of the cards matched the vendors' claims of surrounding you with sound, but the various 3-D effects all made a noticeable improvement: The sound was brighter and more alive when we used the special effects.

Whether you enjoy fending off bad guys in a CD game, or you just want to appreciate the full experience of your multimedia titles, a high-quality wavetable sound card makes a world of difference.

Rating **Sound Cards**

Sound Card	Price*	Synthesizer (ROM size/ upgradable)	Wavetable RAM	Audio Effects	Bundled Software	Audio Quality** Worst–Best	Verdict
Sound Blaster AWE32 PnP Creative Labs (800) 998-5227 *Reader Service No. 752*	$249	E-mu's 8000 (1MB/yes)	512Kb (upgradable to 28MB)	3-D stereo enhancement, reverb, panning, chorus	Complete with a sample editor, a text-to-speech applet, and a device control panel.		★★★★ Clean, accurate sound and a top-notch software bundle.
ASB 3D Wave Pro Ad Lib, (418) 522-6100 *Reader Service No. 754*	$223	Crystal's CS9233 (4MB/yes)	None (upgradable to 4MB)	Spatializer 3-D, reverb, chorus	MIDI sequencer and VocalTec's Internet Phone.		★★★ Good overall audio quality, great software selection.
Soundscape Elite Ensoniq Corp., (800) 776-8637 *Reader Service No. 753*	$159	Ensoniq's Otto (2MB/no)	None	Reverb, chorus, delay	Includes CD, WAV, and MIDI players.		★★★ Lively synthesizer with high-quality effects.
Ultra Kit 8000 Diamond Multimedia (800) 468-5846 *Reader Service No. 755*	$599	Admos's QDSP700 (1MB/no)	None	Binaura 3-D	MIDI player, WAV mixer, player, and editor, plus five CD titles.		★★★ Realistic digital audio, but wavetable sound is lacking.
NuSound PnP 32 Orchid Technology (800) 767-2443 *Reader Service No. 756*	$159	Crystal's CS9233 (1MB/yes)	None	Spatializer 3-D, reverb, panning, chorus	All the basics, including CD, WAV, and MIDI players.		★★ Digital audio quality is solid, but wavetable sound lacks realism.
TeleMedia Windows 95 Companion Kit TeleVideo, (800) 835-3228 *Reader Service No. 757*	$488	Admos's QDSP501 (2MB/yes)	None	None	Includes WAV and MIDI players, plus six CD titles.		★★ Standard audio is fine, but wavetable audio sounds mechanical.

*ESTIMATED STREET PRICE. **RATINGS ARE BASED ON JURY TEST OF RELATIVE DIGITAL AND WAVETABLE AUDIO QUALITY

Sound Check

It's sad but true: Many companies bundle cheap $10 speakers with their $3,000 computer systems. The good news is that for less than $100 you can get a pair of powered multimedia speakers that will do your sound card justice. And if you're willing to spend a bit more, you can put together a system that rivals a dedicated stereo. To determine just how good a sound card could, well, sound, our labs jury tested ten sets of speakers: five that cost less than $100 and five that are more than $100.

We were pleasantly surprised to find some low-priced gems. NEC Technologies' AudioTower and Labtec Enterprises' LCS-3010 are both housed in sophisticated cases that were once exclusive to high-end PC speakers. The design emphasizes bass sounds and helps produce resonant low frequencies.

Even more surprising, though, was QuickShot's $49 pair of Sound Force 600 speakers. The audio quality was robust, in part because of the powerful 15-watt-per-channel amplifier. Peavey Electronics' PS-500 also performed fairly well, especially in reproducing higher-pitched sounds and effects. Sony Electronics' SRS-PC40 was the least favored by listeners in the jury test.

The over-$100 category consisted of three-piece sets (two speakers and one subwoofer) with the exception of Bose's dual-speaker MediaMate. This design contributed to clean, clear sound that revealed subtleties in the sample tracks. It was outperformed, however, by finer subwoofer-satellite combinations, such as Advent Powered Partners' AV622, Altec Lansing's ACS500, and Cambridge SoundWorks' SoundWorks. Equipped with 30- to 40-watt subwoofers, these systems effortlessly handled everything from low rumbling bass to the high-end sizzle of cymbals and sirens.

SoundWorks wowed listeners with impeccable sound highlighted by deep, resonant bass. The AV622 was favored by our jury as having the cleanest, most transparent sound. The enormous ACS500 set features tower enclosures filled with lots of small speakers that attempt to create a home theater–like experience. This surround-sound effect was only mildly successful in our tests, but the speakers sounded good nonetheless.

Yamaha's YST-SS1010 package combines a YST-M10 satellite and YST-MSW10 subwoofer. The package looked nice, but the sound was not as impressive.

Without decent speakers, even the greatest sound card won't make much of an impact—so don't cheat yourself.

Speakers Under $100

Speaker	Price*	Power Rating	Verdict
Sound Force 600 QuickShot (408) 263-4163 *Reader Service No. 758*	$49 list	15 watts per channel	★★★★★ The speaker enclosures are crude-looking, but the sound is great for the money.
AudioTower NEC Technolgies (800) 632-4636 *Reader Service No. 759*	$99	8 watts per channel	★★★★ Good frequency response, nice design.
LCS-3010 Labtec Enterprises (360) 896-2000 *Reader Service No. 760*	$89	10 watts per channel	★★★½ Impressive bass response for small, inexpensive speakers.
PS-500 Peavey Electronics Corp. (800) 367-7833 *Reader Service No. 761*	$89 list	5 watts per channel	★★½ Clean and true sound, but lacks punch.
SRS-PC40 Sony Electronics (800) 352-7669 *Reader Service No. 762*	$99 list	3 watts per channel	★½ Weak sound that was also plagued by distortion.

*ESTIMATED STREET PRICE UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE.

Speakers Over $100

Speaker	Price*	Power Rating	Verdict
SoundWorks Cambridge SoundWorks (800) 367-4434 *Reader Service No. 763*	$210	8.1 watts per channel, plus 33.3-watt subwoofer	★★★★½ Dynamic sound with deep, rich bass; an excellent value.
AV622 Advent Powered Partners (800) 447-3257 *Reader Service No. 764*	$299 list	8 watts per channel, plus 30-watt subwoofer is huge.	★★★½ Clean, clear sound, but subwoofer
ACS500 Altec Lansing (800) 648-6663 *Reader Service No. 765*	$399	22.5 watts total, plus 40-watt subwoofer	★★★ Impressive package with good-quality sound.
MediaMate Bose Corp. (800) 444-2673 *Reader Service No. 766*	$250	Approximately 20 to 30 watts per channel	★★★ Portable package that delivers clean, clear sound.
YST-SS1010 Yamaha Corp. (800) 301-7076 *Reader Service No. 767*	$249	10 watts per channel, plus 25-watt subwoofer	★★½ Average overall sound quality in a nice-looking design.

*ESTIMATED STREET PRICE UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE.

Final Analysis: The Best Components for Quality Audio

Sound Choices

Adding high-quality audio to your computer system has never been easier. Thanks to sound card manufacturers' quick adoption of the Windows 95 Plug and Play standard, grueling installations are history.

The six Plug and Play sound cards we tested all handle 16-bit, CD-quality sound with flair, although we were a bit disappointed in the quality of the wavetable synthesizers. Our overall favorite was Creative Labs' Sound Blaster AWE32 PnP. It offers excellent digital-audio quality, good wavetable sound for MIDI files, a handful of software titles, and an expansion connector for adding more sounds later. Ad Lib's ASB 3D Wave Pro and Ensoniq's Soundscape Elite also sounded good, particularly when playing back MIDI files, but they suffered a bit from annoying background noise.

All of the sound card packages include sophisticated software utilities to take advantage of the cards' features. The Sound Blaster bundles a newly designed software console for controlling the components of the card—digital audio, FM synthesizer, wavetable synthesizer, a text-to-speech converter, and a custom sample editing utility, among others. Ensoniq's Soundscape Elite, Diamond's Ultra Kit 8000, Orchid's NuSound PnP 32, and TeleVideo's TeleMedia Windows 95 Companion Kit all offer a software console and a MIDI sequencer in addition to CD, MIDI and WAV file players. The ASB 3D Wave Pro goes one step further and bundles Vocal-Tec's Internet Phone utility, which uses your sound card to talk to others on the Internet. The Ultra Kit 8000 and the TeleMedia Windows 95 Companion Kit are bundled with multimedia CD titles.

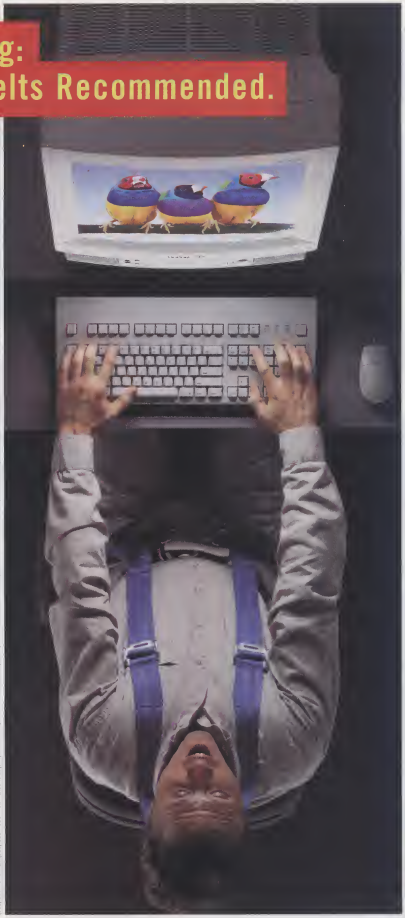
Multimedia speakers, meanwhile, have also come a long way. QuickShot's Sound Force 600, NEC's AudioTower, and Labtec's LCS-3010 sell for under $100 and nicely complement any high-quality sound card. (And the top-ranking Sound Force 600 costs less than $50.) If you want the ultimate in computer sound, choose the subwoofer-equipped Cambridge SoundWorks' SoundWorks or Advent's AV622. Both impressed our jury with clean, wide-ranging sound that promises new life for your presentations, games, and multimedia CDs.

DECISION MAKER

CHOOSE THE RIGHT **SOUND CARD** FOR YOUR SYSTEM

1 Choose the factor that's most important.	2 Choose the next most important factor.	3 What else is important?	4 For your needs, the best product to buy is...
Audio Quality	Price	Upgradability	Creative Labs Sound Blaster AWE32
		Special Effects	Ensoniq Soundscape Elite
	Bundled Software	Upgradability	Creative Labs Sound Blaster AWE32
		Special Effects	Creative Labs Sound Blaster AWE32
Price	Audio Quality	Upgradability	Ad Lib ASB 3D Wave Pro
		Special Effects	Ensoniq Soundscape Elite
	Bundled Software	Upgradability	Creative Labs Sound Blaster AWE32
		Special Effects	Creative Labs Sound Blaster AWE32
Bundled Software	Price	Upgradability	Creative Labs Sound Blaster AWE32
		Special Effects	Creative Labs Sound Blaster AWE32
	Audio Quality	Upgradability	Creative Labs Sound Blaster AWE32
		Special Effects	Creative Labs Sound Blaster AWE32

Warning: Seat Belts Recommended.



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PC WORLD June 1995
BEST BUY

- "the best combination of price, performance, features, and support"... way ahead of the pack."
- "best overall value in a V.34 modem."
- "the clear Best Buy in this roundup."

BYTE/NSTL LAB REPORT June 1995
BEST OVERALL

- "top honors in almost every aspect of our benchmarks."

ProClass 288 MT V.34

New Estimated Street Price: $289

Practical Class 288 MT II V.34

New Estimated Street Price: $199

HOME OFFICE COMPUTING Jan. 1995
EDITORS PICK AWARD

- "represents the cutting edge of today's telecommunications technology...and better priced."

PC MAGAZINE March 14,1995

- "it's performance out distances even much more expensive modems."
- "by far a top performer overall."
- "best - performing modem."

ProClass 288 EZ-Port™

New Estimated Street Price: $289

PC WEEK April 3, 1995
ANALYST CHOICE

- "provided the most efficient built-in power management."
- "best combination of price and performance."

BYTE/NSTL LAB REPORT June 1995
BEST OVERALL

- "the modem ran extremely well, finishing first in our PC Card fax testing."

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Circle 253 on reader service card.

The Right Way to the I-Way

Save money. Speed up access. Get better services. Here's how.

Are you paying too much for Internet access? Is your service slow and unreliable? Or maybe you're dying to get online, but you've been waiting for the right time to start. Fortunately, your options for getting onto the Internet have never been better. Commercial, national, and local online service providers now offer a broad range of solutions for browsing the World Wide Web, visiting newsgroups, managing e-mail, and taking care of other Net essentials. We've compiled this comprehensive guide to the best local, national, and commercial Internet service providers. Using it, you'll be able to find the

BY HENRY NORR

Net Solutions

Scenario	Best Choice
You are new to telecommunications.	**Online service**
You like your current online service.	**Online service**
Most of your friends and colleagues use the same online service.	**Online service**
Family members with varying levels of expertise will share your account.	**Online service**
You want to control what your children view.	**Online service**
You want cheap and easy e-mail only.	**Online service**
You need access when traveling anywhere.	**Online service**
You need access when traveling in major U.S. cities.	**National provider or online service**
You want the most Internet hours for the least money.	**National provider or local provider**
You want a choice of browsers and other Internet tools.	**National provider, local provider, or online service**
You have or plan to get an ISDN line.	**National provider or local provider**
You want your own domain name.	**Local provider or national provider**
You prefer structured, organized, proprietary content.	**Online service**
You want Internet training, consulting, or Web page development.	**Local provider**
You want to publish an inexpensive, basic home page on the Web.	**Online service or local provider**
You want direct access to an unlimited number of files for download.	**National provider or local provider**

provider with the services and prices that best match your needs and budget.

Just a few years ago, if you wanted Internet access you had to wade through a sea of jargon and acronyms like TCP/IP, SLIP, and PPP. But today's service providers make signing up for Internet access almost as easy as ordering telephone service or cable TV. Prices are plummeting, and the software you need to get going online is readily available.

The Net is a much friendlier place today, too. You'll find the companies competing for your Internet dollars are increasingly consumer-oriented and their software reflects the trend toward ease-of-use. In most cases, getting an Internet account is as simple as installing some software and entering a credit-card number. The hard part is choosing among the available options.

Generally, there are three ways to get Internet access: through a commercial online service, a national service provider, or a local provider. In each instance, the provider has modem-equipped computers attached directly to the Internet with a high-bandwidth data pipe, such as a T1 or T3 line. You and other subscribers connect and transfer data to the Internet through the service company's dedicated lines. The type of Internet service provider you choose will depend on what you plan to do on the Internet and, in some cases, the location you're calling from.

Online Services The explosion of interest in e-mail and the World Wide Web is causing a fury among the major commercial online service providers to offer the best access to the Net. Prodigy was the first to provide a Web browser, but America Online, CompuServe, and Microsoft Network have been quick to follow. All offer full-featured Web browsers with support for Internet e-mail, newsgroups, and other extras. In addition, the online services are trying to distinguish themselves by incorporating extra-value content such as America Online's Road Trips, which take you on informative excursions through the Web.

Commercial online services make accessing the Internet easiest, they offer special features such as parental controls, and their prices are competitive. But they deliver the slowest performance.

National Providers Two types of companies dominate the national service provider arena. One is a group of relatively young companies little known outside the Internet market. They got their start providing Internet access for business customers, gradually built up nationwide networks, and have in recent years capitalized on the growing popular interest in cyberspace. Companies matching this profile include UUNET Technologies, Performance Systems International (PSI), and NetCom On-Line. The other group consists of computer and communications giants—including IBM and MCI—that are attempting to grab a share of this new market on the strength of their existing infrastructures, expertise, and customer loyalty. AT&T is about to launch an access program, too.

National providers are notable for their high-performance systems and low flat-rate plans. They target more-experienced users and business customers, although they've recently been reaching out to wider audiences and offering software that's easy to use. And while online services such as CompuServe and America Online add low-cost, Internet-only services, look for national provider prices to continue to drop.

Local Providers It doesn't take much to become an Internet service provider, and entrepreneurs are setting up shop everywhere. There are now more than 1,000 Internet service providers across the United States. Some have matured into major regional operations; others are strictly local, even neighborhood-based, businesses. And despite mounting competition from larger and more established players, new service providers are appearing all the time.

Local and regional providers are the most diverse group, offering competitive pricing, flexibility, local information that may not be available anywhere else in cyberspace, and a personal touch that larger services can't match.

Commercial online services, national providers, and local providers all give you quick and easy access to the Net. As the competition among them heats up, you can expect even lower rates, easier connections, and more service options tailored to specific needs.

In the meantime, you need to decide which I-Way on-ramp is for you. The scenarios listed in "Net Solutions," at left, will help you determine which Internet option best suits your needs. Once you've made a decision, read on for more details about each access route.

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Circle 136 on reader service card.

Indirect Access

Two years ago, most commercial online services didn't even offer Internet access. Today, the four largest services—America Online, CompuServe, Prodigy, and the new Microsoft Network—provide direct access to the Net. In fact, America Online and CompuServe let you use your company's speedy T1 line via TCP/IP connections. And all of the services add features like tutorials, search engines, hotlists, and parental controls.

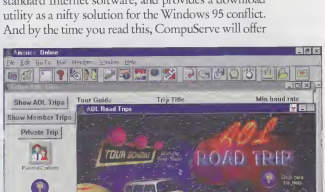
America Online Among the big four online services, America Online is the leader in large part because of its aggressive Internet strategy. Its Internet Connection area offers access to all major Internet services. Icons scattered throughout America Online's content areas also take you to related Internet resources.

Version 2.5 of America Online has a capable built-in Web browser, but if you prefer Netscape Navigator or any other Internet application, you can download America Online's free WINSOCK.DLL. However, Windows 95 makes you shuffle Microsoft's own version of Winsock out of the Windows directory—a significant annoyance, especially if you also use programs that look for the Microsoft version.

With America Online's explosive growth over the past few years, many users have complained of access problems, including sudden connection losses and frequent busy signals. We had a few problems during testing, but on the whole, performance was good. And America Online recently announced new GNN Internet-only service ($14.95 per month for 20 hours).

CompuServe Although it was the first online service to offer Internet features such as FTP, Telnet, and Usenet newsgroups, CompuServe used to trail behind its competitors in terms of Web access. However, WinCIM 2.0, the latest version of CompuServe's client software, now includes an integrated browser—the popular Spry Mosaic.

CompuServe is also available worldwide. It enjoys a good reputation for reliability and it no longer commands the premium rates it once did. In fact, its Super Value Plan ($24.95 per month for 20 hours of access, plus $1.95 for each additional hour) makes it much more economical than America Online for moderate and heavy users of both the online service and the Internet. CompuServe's Winsock also lets you use any standard Internet software, and provides a download utility as a nifty solution for the Windows 95 conflict. And by the time you read this, CompuServe will offer



Tour Guide: Let one of America Online's Road Trips be your guide to the World Wide Web or America Online itself.

Commercial Online Services

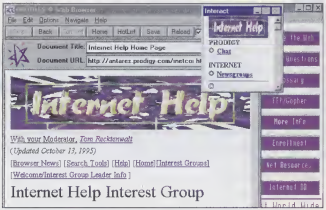
Provider	Monthly Rates	Rate per Additional Hour	Connection Type	Space for Personal Web Page	Support for Third-Party Browsers
America Online (800) 827-6364 *Reader Service No. 774*	$9.95 (5-hour plan); $14.95 (20-hour, Internet-only GNN plan)	$2.95 (5-hour plan); $1.95 (20-hour plan)	28.8Kbps modem or TCP/IP	Yes	Yes
CompuServe (800) 848-8199 *Reader Service No. 775*	$9.95 (5-hour plan); $24.95 (20-hour plan)	$2.95 (5-hour plan); $1.95 (20-hour plan)	28.8Kbps, 14.4Kbps, or TCP/IP	Yes modem	Yes
Microsoft Network (800) 386-5550 *Reader Service No. 776*	$4.95 (3-hour plan); $19.95 (20-hour plan)	$2.50 (3-hour plan); $2.00 (20-hour plan)	28.8Kbps modem	No	Yes
Prodigy Services (800) 776-3449 *Reader Service No. 777*	$9.95 (5-hour plan); $29.95 (30-hour plan)	$2.95 (5-hour plan); $2.95 (30-hour plan)	14.4Kbps modem	Yes	Yes

a personal home-page service, as do America Online and Prodigy, but with added advantages such as 1MB of disk space and an impressive authoring tool.

Prodigy The third-largest service, Prodigy, has led the way in giving subscribers access to the World Wide Web. Most recently, it was the first service to provide free space and templates for personal Web home pages. Prodigy's browser is built into the standard client software, and you can jump between the service's content and the Internet at any time.

Prodigy's low rates—30 hours for about $30—makes it the price leader among the online services. On the other hand, you don't get as much for your money because its speed is limited to 14.4Kbps.

Microsoft Network Microsoft's online service doesn't suffer from speed problems—all of its local access points offer 28.8Kbps access. Nevertheless, it's much slower than its rivals. You may also have to pay long-distance charges to use it for Internet access: If you choose the "MSN and Internet" option when you join, you're limited to a surprisingly short list of local access numbers. Moreover, MSN is the least reliable online service for Internet access: Our connection failed frequently for no apparent reason. Most of these glitches are due to the service's recent launch and may be fixed in the near future. But for now, they're annoying.



Integrated Content: Prodigy's help center is in the form of a Web page, and is available to Prodigy members only.

MSN and its Web browser, the Mosaic-derived Internet Explorer 2.0, require Windows 95, but the browser doesn't come with retail versions of the new operating system—you have to download it for free from MSN or buy Microsoft's Plus. But once set up, Internet Explorer integrates with the Windows 95 environment. You can create shortcuts to any Internet site and store them on the Windows 95 desktop, or embed them into documents and messages. It's the only 32-bit browser that's part of a commercial online service.

Regardless of which online service you choose, you'll get an easy-to-grasp Internet extension to your current online experience.

DECISION MAKER

CHOOSE THE RIGHT **ONLINE SERVICE** FOR YOUR INTERNET ACCESS

1 Choose the factor that's most important.	2 Choose the next most important factor.	3 What else is important?	4 For your needs, the best service to buy is . . .
Price	Connection Speed	Usability	Prodigy
		Services Provided	CompuServe
	Software Included	Usability	Prodigy
		Services Provided	CompuServe
Connection Speed	Price	Usability	America Online
		Services Provided	CompuServe
	Software Included	Usability	America Online
		Services Provided	CompuServe
Software Included	Price	Usability	Prodigy
		Services Provided	CompuServe
	Connection Speed	Usability	America Online
		Services Provided	CompuServe

National Service Providers: High Performance and Low Prices

Coast-to-Coast Connections

The Internet is where the action is. So why take a roundabout route through an online service when you can go directly to the real thing?

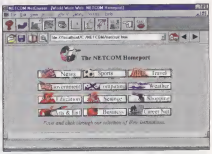
That's the pitch presented by a growing number of companies that let you dial into the Internet through local nodes, or points of presence (POPs in Internet jargon), across the country and, in some cases, abroad.

This provider category includes some well-known giants. IBM Global Network, the default Internet provider for users of OS/2 Warp Connect, offers its services to Windows users as well. MCI Telecommunications' service, internetMCI, provides users with the option of a customized version of Netscape Navigator for $89. And AT&T is about to jump into the market with its WorldNet Services program.

The three that offer the widest range of services are UUNET Technologies, NetCom On-Line, and Performance Systems International.

UUNET Technologies The company Microsoft hired to develop the dial-up infrastructure for Microsoft Network, UUNET Technologies, offers a plan called AlterDial to individual users and small businesses. It includes special features such as custom domain names (for a fee), which let you have an e-mail address such as *yourfirstname@yourlastname*.com, but it's a bit more expensive than other national providers and doesn't offer bundled software to subscribers.

NetCom On-Line Communications Services and Performance Systems International offer bargain rates and top-notch, graphical-interface applications. Unlike commercial online services, however, most national providers charge a start-up fee.



Foolproof: NetCruiser's interface makes it a cinch to navigate the Net.

NetCom The standard service plan from NetCom includes 40 prime-time hours and unlimited use at other times for $19.95 per month.

NetCruiser, the company's proprietary Internet-access software, offers point-and-click access to most Net services—such as Netscape Navigator—from a single toolbar; it even has an advanced Web browser built in. If you prefer different

National Service Providers

Provider	Monthly Rates	Rates per Additional Hour	Start-up Fee	Prime-time Hours	Connection Type	Space for Home Page	Software Included
IBM Global Network (800) 455-5056 *Reader Service No. 792*	$12.95 (8-hour plan); $29.95 (30-hour plan)	$3.00 (8-hour plan); $2.00 (30-hour plan)	$19.95	Not applicable	28.8Kbps modem	Extra charge	None
MCI Telecommunications (800) 353-3545 *Reader Service No. 793*	$9.95 (5-hour plan); toll-free–only plan: $9.95 (unlimited)	$2.50 (5-hour plan); $6.50 (unlimited)	$18.95	Not applicable	28.8Kbps modem	Extra charge	None
NetCom On-Line (800) 353-6600 *Reader Service No. 794*	$19.95 (40 hours prime-time, other times unlimited)	$2.00 (40-hour plan)	$25.00	M-F, 9 a.m.–midnight	28.8Kbps modem	No	NetCruiser
Performance Systems Int'l Pipeline USA (800) 827-7482 *Reader Service No. 795*	$19.95 (unlimited)	Not applicable	None	Not applicable	28.8Kbps modem or ISDN	Yes	Pipeline USA
Performance Systems Int'l InterRamp, (800) 827-7482 *Reader Service No. 796*	$9.00 (9-hour plan); $29.00 (29 hours prime-time)	$1.50 (9-hour plan); $1.50 (29-hour plan)	$9.00	M-F, 8 a.m.–11 p.m.	28.8Kbps modem or ISDN	No	Internet Valet (limited offer)
UUNET Technologies (800) 488-6384 *Reader Service No. 797*	$30.00 (25-hour plan)	$2.00 (25-hour plan)	$25.00	Not applicable	28.8Kbps modem or ISDN	Extra charge	None

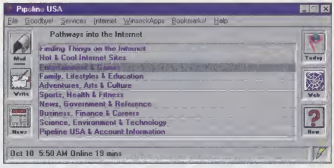
software, you can switch to it after you dial in with NetCruiser because NetCruiser now complies with the Winsock 1.1 standard.

To make the Net more manageable, NetCruiser opens to NetCom's Homeport Web page, which looks like the opening screen of a proprietary service. It has buttons for news, sports, travel, arts and entertainment, and other services, each of which takes you to a page with links to related Web sites. The Search button brings you to a page that pulls together several Internet search options.

Performance Systems International Pipeline USA and InterRamp, each with its own all-in-one interface software, are the two offerings from PSI.

Aimed primarily at people who are new to the Net, also known as *newbies,* Pipeline USA's software is straightforward. In fact, there are only 6 icons on the opening screen, compared with 16 on NetCruiser's.

Don't assume, though, that Pipeline USA is for newcomers *only.* When you look past Pipeline's opening icons and check its menus, you'll find support for most Internet features. The latest version even lets you add other programs to its menus and is Winsock-compliant. And, Pipeline USA's pricing structure is an excellent deal for heavy users: For $19.95 per month you get unlimited access to the Net.



Accessible: Pipeline USA's user-friendly interface takes you directly to its six most popular services.

PSI offers two more options through InterRamp: You get 9 hours for $9 (which at press time was the cheapest way to get on the Net through a national provider), or 29 prime-time hours, plus unlimited late-night and weekend access, for $29. InterRamp customers get a software suite called Internet Valet, which includes the Enhanced Mosaic Web browser, Qualcomm's Eudora e-mail package, and other popular programs.

Aside from the different software, the main distinction between InterRamp and Pipeline USA is performance. Connecting, downloading, and browsing operations are a bit faster on InterRamp.

If you're a frequent Web user, using a national provider is an excellent way to go.

DECISION MAKER

CHOOSE THE RIGHT **NATIONAL PROVIDER** FOR YOUR INTERNET ACCESS

1 Choose the factor that's most important.	2 Choose the next most important factor.	3 What else is important?	4 For your needs, the best product to buy is . . .
Price	Connection Speed	Usability	PSI Pipeline USA
		Services Provided	NetCom On-Line
	Software Included	Usability	PSI Pipeline USA
		Services Provided	NetCom On-Line
Connection Speed	Price	Usability	PSI Pipeline USA
		Services Provided	PSI InterRamp
	Software Included	Usability	PSI Pipeline USA
		Services Provided	PSI InterRamp
Software Included	Price	Usability	PSI Pipeline USA
		Services Provided	NetCom On-Line
	Connection Speed	Usability	PSI Pipeline USA
		Services Provided	PSI InterRamp USA

Local Service Providers: Competitive Prices and a Personal Touch

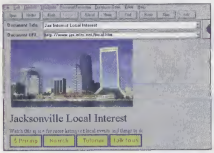
Backyard Browsing

Local Internet service providers are popping up in droves. The List, a Web site that provides a comprehensive guide to Internet service providers, had 1,584 entries at press time—and the number is increasing weekly. The majority of these are small providers that serve a particular metropolitan area or geographic region. But given the ample alternatives available from commercial services and national providers, why should you consider a local provider? Here are several good reasons to consider this option, as well as some caveats.

Benefits The going rates among local providers for individual dial-up accounts are similar to those of the national companies—typically $15 to $30 per month for 20, 50, or even an unlimited number of hours. Most also have nominal start-up fees. But if your needs are extremely heavy or light, you might find a bargain. For frequent users, we found local providers that charge as little as $10 per month (plus a start-up fee) for unlimited access. At the other end of the spectrum, those who expect to use the Internet only occasionally can find plans which offer up to 3 hours of 28.8Kbps access for only $3.95 per month.

Many local providers also offer additional services, although usually for an extra charge. For example, if you need Internet-related training and consulting, or someone to design and maintain a Web page for your business, it probably makes sense to find someone in your immediate area. On the other hand, most local access providers do not include their own software, so you'll need a stand-alone Web browser.

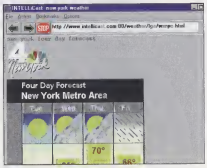
Looking for local content? Most of the local providers also carry information specific to their area—news, weather, entertainment listings, and classifieds. If you look hard enough, you might be able to access the same material from an online service or national provider, but a local operation is more likely to make it easily accessible by putting links on its default home page. And if the local provider has space for personal Web pages (most do), it's a good place to find other Net-savvy people and businesses in your area.



Local Interest: CyberGate-Florida gives you access to area listings.

Drawbacks If you travel frequently and need to gain access to your e-mail or the Web from the road, local providers can be irksome. To dial in, you will probably have to make a long-distance toll call, because few local providers have toll-free numbers.

Performance also varies widely. If a local provider doesn't add phone lines as its subscriber base grows, users may often hit busy signals when they're trying to grab urgent e-mail. Some other problems that can plague local providers are slow Web browsing and lengthy file transfers. These mishaps can occur if the link between the provider's facilities and the Internet's backbone lacks adequate bandwidth. With the number of subscribers growing by leaps and bounds, it's easy for even the most dedicated provider to fall behind in these areas. Of course, national providers and online services are susceptible to the same problems, but they have more resources to address them.



Regional News: Pipeline offers both local content and I-Way access.

SOS Technical support and customer service are also uneven. Some local providers offer a personal touch you won't get from a large company, but few provide 24-hour support, which is a common bonus among the major providers. Even the most dedicated local providers don't have the technical resources or broad knowledge base that national or commercial providers can call on to help solve your problem.

You might find information about local providers in your hometown newspaper or phone book, or from local computer dealers. You can also search several provider directories available on the Internet. Mecklermedia's The List (http://thelist.com/) lets you search by state or area code, and provides detailed information, ratings, and comments from other users, as well as links to providers' Web sites. Another good source is the Providers of Commercial Internet Access directory, generally known as the Celestin list, which is available at www.celestin.com/pocia/index.html.

When choosing a local provider, the best source of information is probably word of mouth. If you're considering a local provider, ask for customer references or check with a local computer user group. And don't forget to check out our list of leading local providers and the services they offer on the next page.

HENRY NORR, an *editor emeritus and columnist at* MacWeek, *surfs the Net from Macs and PCs.*

Local Service Providers

Provider	Area	Monthly Rates	Rates per Additional Hour	Start-up Fee	Connection Type	Special Features
Clark Internet Services (800) 784-6512 *Reader Service No. 778*	Baltimore; Washington, D.C.; northern Virginia	$33.00 (8 hours per day or unlimited with a Unix shell account)	$1.00 (6-hour plan)	$15.00	28.8Kbps modem	Real-time stock quotes, shareware directory
CyberGate-Florida (305) 428-4283 *Reader Service No. 779*	Florida	$20.00 (50 prime-time hours, unlimited on weekends and from midnight-8 a.m.)	$1.00 (50-hour plan)	$25.00	28.8Kbps modem	None
Delta Internet Services (714) 778-0370 *Reader Service No. 780*	Southern California	$9.95 (5-hour plan); $24.95 (60 prime-time hours); $24.95 (75-hour plan)	$1.75 (5-hour plan); $1.50 (60-hour plan); $1.50 (75-hour plan)	$19.95	28.8Kbps modem	Free Web page storage for 60- and 75-hour accounts
InterAccess (708) 498-2542 *Reader Service No. 781*	Chicago and suburbs	$13.00 (5-hour plan); $28.00 (unlimited hours, if paying by credit card)	$2.30 (5-hour plan)	$15.00	28.8Kbps modem	Domain names and extra mailboxes for extra charge
Internet Express (800) 592-1240 *Reader Service No. 782*	Colorado	$9.95 (4-hour plan); $29.95 (20-hour plan); $39.95 (50-hour plan)	$2.75 (4-hour plan); $1.25 (20-hour plan); $1.25 (50-hour plan)	$29.95	28.8Kbps modem	Domain names and anonymous ftp for extra charge, shareware CD
MindSpring Enterprises (800) 719-4332 *Reader Service No. 783*	Atlanta, southeastern states	$15.00 (15-hour plan); $35.00 (unlimited hours)	$1.00 (15-hour plan)	$35.00	28.8Kbps modem or ISDN	Domain names and mail forwarding for extra charge
Msen (313) 996-4562 *Reader Service No. 784*	Michigan	$30.00 (75-hour plan); $60.00 (150-hour plan)	$2.00 (75-hour plan); $2.00 (150-hour plan)	$30.00	28.8Kbps modem or ISDN	None
Northwest Nexus (800) 539-3505 *Reader Service No. 785*	Pacific Northwest	$30.00 (unlimited hours)	Not applicable	$30.00	28.8Kbps modem or ISDN	None
Panix Public Access (212) 741-4400 *Reader Service No. 786*	New York, New Jersey	$10.00 (unlimited for Unix shell account); $35.00 (unlimited for PPP or SLIP account)	Not applicable	None	28.8Kbps modem	None
Pipeline NY (212) 267-3636 *Reader Service No. 787*	New York	$9.95 (5-hour plan); $19.95 (unlimited hours)	$2.50 (5-hour plan)	None	28.8Kbps modem or ISDN	Accessible from other places via PSI network for extra charge
Software Tool & Die (617) 739-0202 *Reader Service No. 788*	Massachusetts	$20.00 (20-hour plan)	$1.00 (20-hour plan)	None	28.8Kbps modem or ISDN	Govline provides complete transcripts of Congressional hearings
Texas Metronet (214) 705-2900 *Reader Service No. 789*	Dallas-Fort Worth	$16.00 (unlimited hours, if paying by credit card); $19.00 (unlimited hours)	Not applicable	$20.00	28.8Kbps modem or ISDN	None
Vnet Internet Access (800) 377-3282 *Reader Service No. 790*	North Carolina	$29.95 (80 hours, or 2 hours prime-time plus unlimited non–prime-time)	$1.00 (80-hour plan)	$25.00	28.8Kbps modem	None
The Well (415) 332-4335 *Reader Service No. 791*	Northern California	$15.00 (5-hour plan); $35.00 (20-hour plan)	$2.50 (5-hour plan); $2.50 (20-hour plan)	$15.00	28.8Kbps modem or ISDN	Includes access to Well conferences

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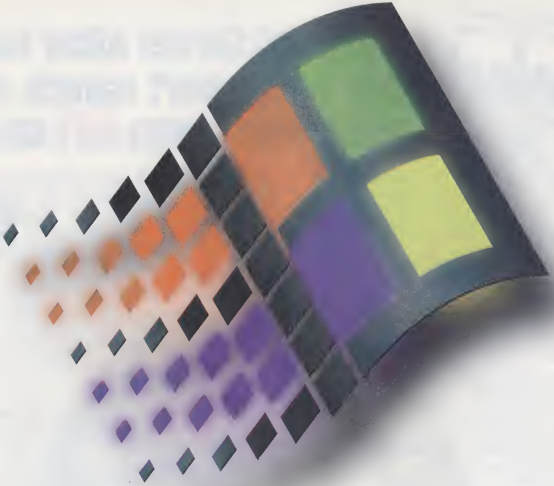

It's all here! PC Computing's exclusive Windows 95 software guide to essential—and entertaining—home and office applications.

Windows 95 BUYERS' GUIDE

In this issue:

- Street Atlas USA 3.0 • ChromaZone • Sidekick 95
- Kiplinger's Home Legal Advisor • DecideRight
- Day-Timer Organizer 2.0 • Instant Multimedia
- QmodemPro • Expresso • Backdrop • Up-to-Date
- Reach Me • QuickXpense 1.6 for Windows 95
- Writer's Edge • Planner for Windows
- QuickView Plus for Windows 95

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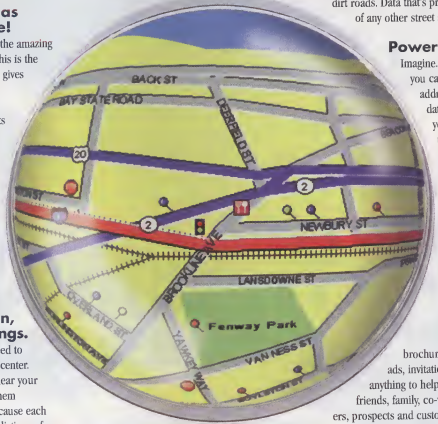

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Imagine. For the *first time ever*, you can take any name and address from any file or database and place it on your map. Add your own text and symbols. Then print your custom-made maps for newsletters, brochures, ads, invitations – anything to help your friends, family, co-workers, prospects and customers locate you. New Select Street Atlas, now available at your software retailer. Get your copy today!

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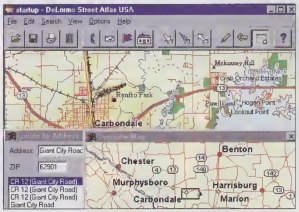
REFERENCE CD-ROM

Street Atlas USA 3.0

Paper-based maps are passé. Squinting to find that little side street, following the freeway as it jumps 30 pages, and wondering if that main road was ever finished—there *is* a better way. CD-ROM–based map resources like DeLorme's Street Atlas USA 3.0 give you mapping power like you've never had before.

Street Atlas's completeness is impressive, and it offers powerful search tools. Enter any street address and zip code anywhere in the 50 states, and Street Atlas will show you, in rich, zoomed detail, the exact location of that address. Or enter a U.S. area code and phone prefix, and Street Atlas highlights the matching region. If you know someone's phone number, you can figure out (approximately) where that person lives. Know the address? Find the phone number through the reverse directory in DeLorme's new Phone Search USA. (Unfortunately, DeLorme sells Phone Search separately for $79; bundled together, the suite would be unbeatable.)



Street Atlas version 3.0 includes new levels of detail, such as hospitals, colleges, shopping centers, civic centers, and other landmarks. The maps are editable and allow annotations, notes, and custom symbols. And once you tailor a map to your liking, you'll find a wealth of custom print layout commands from which to choose. Sounds priceless, eh? Relax. Street Atlas can be yours for just $79. **RICH SCHWERIN**

FILEBOX

Street Atlas USA 3.0

Pros: Search for any U.S. address any way you want.

Cons: Too bad Phone Search USA is sold separately; the two products should be bundled.

Verdict: By far the best mapping resource of its kind.

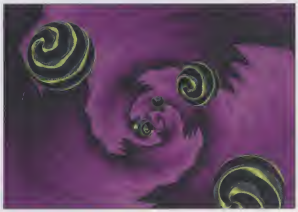
$79 est. street price
DeLorme
(800) 452-5931, (207) 865-1234
Reader Service No. 819

SCREEN SAVER

ChromaZone

Try this test: Take a look at the screen saver installed on your desktop system. Now compare it with the test pattern on late-night television. Can't see much difference? Then you need a change, and Gibson Research's ChromaZone—the first 3-D, interactive, animated screen saver—is just the ticket.

The first thing you'll notice about ChromaZone is its slick space-age interface. Menus slide onto the screen when you click on them, and mini preview windows appear for most options. Cycle through any of the hundreds of 24-bit color images and patterns, then select the one you want to appear. Just beware: Once the screen saver kicks in, you may not be able to take your eyes off the psychedelic effects.



ChromaZone also gives you the power to design your own screen savers. Just choose from the more than 100 supplied images, adjust the settings, and create your own masterpieces.

Unlike many graphical screen savers, ChromaZone won't slow down your system. The program is written in efficient assembly language code, so it's fast. The entire program takes up less than 132K on your hard drive and runs easily under both Windows 3.1 and Windows 95.

Looking for a way to dress up your Windows desktop? Don't miss this new screen saver. **ADAM MEYERSON**

FILEBOX

ChromaZone

Pros: Terrific 3-D animations and effects.

Cons: Hours slip away as you create your own effects.

Verdict: A captivating screen saver at an irresistible price.

$40 est. street price
Gibson Research Corp.
(800) 736-0637, (714) 348-7100
Reader Service No. 818

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- 1,000 photos
- 1,000 TrueType® and Type 1 fonts
- Over 750 3D models

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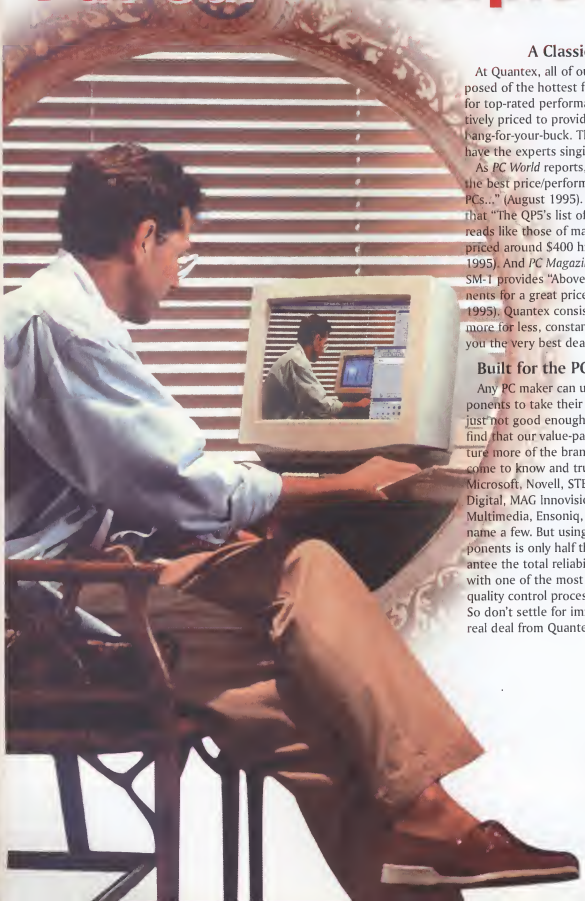
If Quantex had been around back in Mona's day, she probably would have had a much bigger grin.

intel inside pentium® PROCESSOR

Designed for Microsoft® Windows® 95

Put Our Masterpieces



A Classic Deal

At Quantex, all of our systems are composed of the hottest features, tuned up for top-rated performance, then competitively priced to provide the maximum bang-for-your-buck. These masterpieces have the experts singing their praises!

As *PC World* reports, "Quantex offers the best price/performance ratios on PCs..." (August 1995). *Family PC* raves that "The QP5's list of hardware features reads like those of machines typically priced around $400 higher" (July/August 1995). And *PC Magazine* writes that our SM-I provides "Above-average components for a great price..." (Sept. 26, 1995). Quantex consistently gives you more for less, constantly striving to bring you the very best deal.

Built for the PC Connoisseur

Any PC maker can use no-name components to take their price down. That's just not good enough for Quantex. You'll find that our value-packed systems feature more of the brand names you've come to know and trust. Like Intel, Microsoft, Novell, STB Systems, Western Digital, MAG Innovision, Altec Lansing Multimedia, Ensoniq, and Toshiba to name a few. But using top quality components is only half the story. We guarantee the total reliability of our systems with one of the most comprehensive quality control processes in the business. So don't settle for imitations – get the real deal from Quantex!

intel inside

pentium® PROCESSOR

To Work For You

Designed for Microsoft Windows 95

Start

All Quantex systems are not only equipped with Windows® 95 – they're *Designed for Windows 95*. As one of few companies to have passed strict Microsoft® Hardware Compatibility Testing, all of our systems are Plug and Play compliant to make adding new components a snap! For superior performance, check out these advanced components on our QP5/SM-2:

Performance-Enhanced Memory

Get extreme – our QP5/SM-2 features 16MB EDO RAM. The 16MB guarantees optimum software operation, while EDO boosts memory access speeds an additional 33%! Plus, we give you a 256KB L2 Pipelined Burst Cache for extra rendering power. Working together, EDO and the Pipelined Burst Cache cuts the processing time of memory operations, maximizing your system's execution rates to accomplish tasks faster.

Breakthrough Graphics and Media Acceleration

Enter the world of STB PowerGraph 64 Video Acceleration, the experts' choice for complete MPEG playback with full screen and full motion video. This high-performance 64-bit video graphics accelerator with 2MB EDO DRAM is based on the S3 TRIO64 V+ Chipset. That translates into no-holds-barred power, supporting up to 30 frames per second, resolutions up to 1280x1024, plus precise true color for photo-realistic imaging.

Massive Storage Power

An immense 2GB Mode 4 Hard Drive offers the capacity and performance you need to fully optimize Windows 95. In fact, it's the flat-out highest capacity ATA-2 Interface drive to date. Plus, its speedy 16.6 MB/sec data transfer rates, 5400 RPM, 256KB multisegmented cache buffer, and 10ms seek times deliver huge masses of data in a flash.

Digitally Controlled Color Monitors

The MAG 17" Color Monitor boasts complete Plug and Play support, a .26mm dot pitch for ultra-sharp display at 1280x1024 maximum resolution, rapid refresh rate, and a digitally controlled display. It's easy to see why MAG is the world's best selling 17-inch color monitor.

Above System features QP5-SM2

Multimedia That Will Move You

Quantex has teamed up with the multimedia hardware heavyweights to put together a system with premium stereo sound and image quality. Transport yourself to the world of multimedia with the ultra-fast, ultra-smooth MPEG performance of Aztech's 6X EIDE CD-ROM Drive, which boasts a 900 KB/S transfer rate and a 256KB buffer! Then, close your eyes and indulge in the crisp highs and solid bass of the Ensoniq Wavetable Sound Card and Altec Lansing speakers with subwoofer. It's top of the line multimedia at an affordable price, only from Quantex.

Service and Support

At Quantex, we stand behind our products. We back up every system purchase with a 30-Day Money Back Guarantee and Toll-Free Technical Support. That's not all – we give you One Year Express Parts Replacement plus One Year On-Site Service. You even get the option to extend the protection of your system for up to 4 years with the GE Service Protection Plan.

And now, Quantex gives you an even faster and easier way to get information and assistance. Be a part of the Digital Revolution and visit the Quantex Home Page on the Internet at http://www.quantex.com. Check out features such as the Quantex Shopping Mall, Customer Service Center, Technical Support Center and Resource Room, all accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!

QUANTEX

http://www.quantex.com

Family Software Bundle

- Novell PerfectHome: PerfectWorks; Memphis Math; Write With Me; InfoCentral; Grammatik; Clip Art for the Home; Clip Art for the Office; Read With Me 1 & 2; Hard Evidence: The Marilyn Monroe Files
- The 1995 Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia
- Complete Reference Library (over 10 titles)
- Al Unser Arcade Racing
- USS Ticonderoga
- Animals II
- How Your Body Works
- Quicken Financial Manager-SE
- EveryWhere USA Travel Guide
- America Online, Prodigy, CompuServe (one month trial membership to on-line services)
- NetCruiser Plus (Free Internet Access of over 400 hours for one month)

Professional Software Bundle

- Novell PerfectOffice: WordPerfect 6.1; Quattro Pro 6.0; Envoy; InfoCentral; Presentations GroupWise
- The 1995 Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia
- Complete Reference Library (over 10 titles included)
- SharkWare (The best way to manage your Contacts, Calendar, Phone Calls and To-Do list)
- Quicken Financial Manager-SE
- Astound (#1 in Multimedia Presentations)
- Phone Disc Business '95
- Al Unser Arcade Racing
- USS Ticonderoga
- America Online, Prodigy, CompuServe (one month trial membership to on-line services)
- NetCruiser Plus (Free Internet Access of over 400 hours for one month)

intel inside pentium® PROCESSOR

Designed for Microsoft® Windows 95

QP5/75 M-1 $1649

- Intel 75MHz Pentium* processor
- 8MB EDO Performance-Enhanced Memory
- 1GB EIDE Mode 4 Hard Drive
- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 64-Bit PCI Graphic Accelerator w/ 1MB (MPEG Playback w/Full Screen & Motion Video)
- 15" MAG Flat-Screen 1280x1024 Monitor
- 14,400 Baud Fax/Modem w/voice mail
- Toshiba 4X EIDE CD-ROM Drive (190ms)
- 16-Bit Stereo Sound Card
- Magnetically Shielded Speakers
- Newly Designed Mini-Tower Case
- 104-Key keyboard & Microsoft* Mouse
- Microsoft Windows*95
- Family Software Bundle (preinstalled)

QP5/100 M-1.....$1799
QP5/120 M-1.....$1849

QP5/100 M-2 $1899

- Intel 100MHz Pentium processor
- 8MB EDO Performance-Enhanced Memory
- 1GB EIDE Mode 4 Hard Drive
- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 64-Bit PCI Graphic Accelerator w/ 2MB (MPEG Playback w/Full Screen & Motion Video)
- 15" MAG Flat-Screen 1280x1024 Monitor
- 28,800 Baud V.34 Fax/Modem
- Toshiba 4X 190ms EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- 16-Bit Stereo Sound Card
- Magnetically Shielded Speakers
- Newly Designed Mini-Tower Case
- 104-Key keyboard & Microsoft Mouse
- Microsoft Windows95
- Family Software Bundle (preinstalled)

QP5/75 M-2.....$1749
QP5/120 M-2.....$1949

QP5/120 M-3 $2199

- Intel 120MHz Pentium processor
- 16MB RAM
- 256KB Pipelined Burst Cache
- 1.2GB EIDE Mode 4 Hard Drive
- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- STB PowerGraph 64 Video w/ 1MB (MPEG Playback w/Full Screen & Motion Video)
- 15" MAG Flat-Screen 1280x1024 Monitor
- 14,400 Baud Fax/Modem w/ voice mail
- Toshiba 4X 190ms EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- 16-Bit Stereo Sound Card
- Magnetically Shielded Speakers
- Newly Designed Mini-Tower Case
- 104-Key keyboard & Microsoft Mouse
- Microsoft Windows95
- Family Software Bundle (preinstalled)

QP5/75 M-3.....$1949
QP5/100 M-3.....$2149

QP5/133 M-4 $2499

- Intel 133MHz Pentium processor
- 16MB EDO Performance Memory
- 256KB Pipelined Burst Cache
- 1.2GB EIDE Mode 4 Hard Drive
- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
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- 15" MAG Flat-Screen 1280x1024 Monitor
- 14,400 Baud Fax/Modem w/voice mail
- Aztech 6X EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Ensoniq* 16-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec Lansing ACS-5 Speakers
- Newly Designed Mini-Tower Case
- 104-Key keyboard & Microsoft Mouse
- Microsoft Windows95
- Family Software Bundle (preinstalled)

QP5/100 M-4.....$2299
QP5/120 M-4.....$2349

QP5/100 SM $2349

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- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
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- 16-bit Stereo Sound Card
- Altec Lansing ACS-5 Speakers
- Newly Designed Mid-Tower Case
- 104-Key keyboard & Microsoft Mouse
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- Upgrade to 16MB EDO Memory and 256KB Pipelined Burst Cache for $49

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QP5/120 SM.....$2399
QP5/33 SM.....$2549

QP5/120 SM-1 $2749

- Intel 120MHz Pentium processor
- 16MB EDO Performance Memory
- 256KB Pipelined Burst Cache
- 1.6GB 9ms EIDE Mode 4 Hard Drive
- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- ATI MACH 64 PCI w/ 2MB DRAM (MPEG Playback w/Full Screen & Motion Video)
- 17" .26dp MAG 1280x1024 Monitor
- 28,800 Baud V.34 Fax/Modem
- Aztech 6X EIDE 190ms CD-ROM Drive
- Ensoniq 16-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec Lansing ACS-5 Speakers
- Newly Designed Mid-Tower Case
- 104-Key keyboard & Microsoft Mouse
- Microsoft Windows95
- Professional Software Bundle (preinstalled)

QP5/100 SM-1.....$2699
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- 256KB Pipelined Burst Cache
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- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
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- 17" .26dp MAG 1280x1024 Monitor
- 28,800 Baud V.34 Fax/Modem
- Aztech 6X EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Ensoniq 16-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec Lansing ACS-31 Speakers w/ subwoofer
- Newly Designed Mid-Tower Case
- 104-Key keyboard & Microsoft Mouse
- Microsoft Windows95
- Professional Software Bundle (preinstalled)
- Upgrade to ATI MACH 64 PCI w/2MB VRAM for $50 more.

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QP5/120 SM-2.....$2899

Upgrade Specials

"Options Available with System Purchase"

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- Cromer tape backup units: 850MB Add $169 3.2GB Add $219
- Microsoft Natural Keyboard Add $59
- Panasonic KX-6100 Laser Printer for $369 more. (6 ppm, 600 dpi class print quality)
- Call to upgrade to STB PowerGraph 64 Video w/2MB DRAM.

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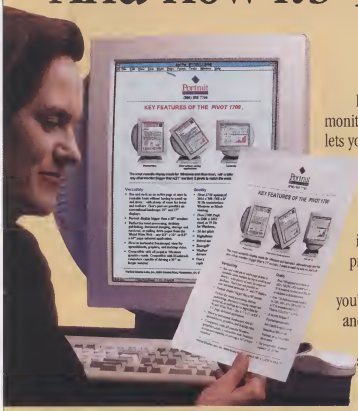
It's the world's most versatile monitor. And now it's 42% bigger.



Presenting the Pivot 1700.™ The only 17"* monitor—for Windows™ *and* Macintosh®—that lets you select the orientation that perfectly suits the work you're doing.

In portrait mode, you can read a full-size 8.5"x 11"document *without scrolling*. Which makes the Pivot 1700 ideal for things you do regularly—like word processing, desktop faxing and e-mail.

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Either way, the spacious 9.6" x 12.9" active display area gives you plenty of room for icons, launch bars and other graphical tools of Windows® 95. Plus our sharp, crisp image and resolutions up to 1280 x 1024 make everything easy to look at.

The Pivot 1700 works with popular Windows graphics cards and standard Macintosh video. It also works with your budget—at about $999, it's yours for what you'd expect to pay for a landscape-only model from Sony, NEC or Apple®.

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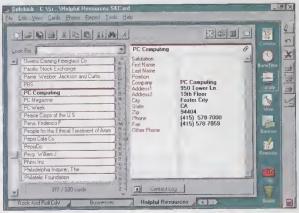
Circle 187 on reader service card.

PERSONAL INFORMATION MANAGER

Sidekick 95

Want a do-everything personal information manager that's as uncluttered and easy to read as a wristwatch? For years Sidekick has been the best minimalist PIM around. The new version adds Windows 95 support and several basic utilities.

Like any PIM, Sidekick has a phone book (called Cardfile), a calendar, and to-do lists. Customize these elements any way you like, pulling dividing lines up, down, or sideways to hide or reveal features. The calendar now includes tabs for daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly views, but still lacks workgroup features such as the ability to resolve schedule conflicts or offer a workgroup solution.



Sidekick's Notes field has evolved into a full word processor in which you can tap out letters or lists. The low-end Expense Report Writer and telephony application program interface support are also great, but we quickly turned off the international time and map feature—they seemed unnecessary.

Even with its new look and some added utilities, Sidekick is still slim enough to fit on just two floppy disks. If you need only the basics for Windows 95, this is the trimmest and simplest information manager around. A Deluxe edition of Sidekick 95 adds the Dashboard 95 shell utility, productivity videos, and Sidekick companions, which offer additional templates and scheduling references. JAMES OLIVER CURY

FILEBOX

Sidekick 95

Pros: No-frills information management and scheduling.

Cons: Lacks workgroup and contact-management features.

Verdict: A minimalist information manager for people who want just the basics.

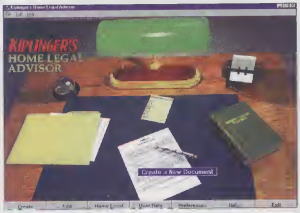
$50 est. street price
Starfish Software
(800) 765-7839, (408) 439-0942
Reader Service No. 820

LEGAL SOFTWARE

Kiplinger's Home Legal Advisor

The first pieces of advice you get from Kiplinger's Home Legal Advisor are to not trust the program completely and to hire a lawyer. In fact, it goes one step further, giving you tips on how to find a good lawyer. Believe it or not, that's a good sign.

Home Legal Advisor takes the guesswork out of basic domestic legal matters such as making a will, leasing a house, or appointing a health-care power of attorney. As the program itself emphasizes, you still need to enlist an attorney to make any of these legal documents binding, but Home Legal Advisor saves you money by helping you prepare simple legal documents on your own.



The program is straightforward: Pick a topic, read the guidelines, create a document, then give it to a lawyer for adjudication. Choose from various types of documents, including living trust, sublease, and prenuptial agreements, plus dozens more. Simply fill in the blanks to create your own documents.

The interface isn't stellar, but plenty of help files fill the gaps. And mercifully, most documents are written in plain English, rather than legalese.

If you're spending too much time and money on legal matters, turn to Home Legal Advisor. It's a good start, and it's not only cheaper than the average lawyer, it's also probably easier to understand. JACK LYON

FILEBOX

Kiplinger's Home Legal Advisor

Pros: A fast, legitimate way to begin a legal matter.

Cons: Bland interface.

Verdict: A great time and money saver for producing your own basic legal documents.

$30 est. street price
Block Financial Corp.
(800) 813-7940, (816) 561-6000
Reader Service No. 821

Introducing Adaptec EZ-SCSI 4.0 software.

If you've been adding peripherals and just upgraded to Windows® 95, you've probably realized that your desktop performance is not a function of the operating system alone. Because true multitasking is more than just your PC and peripherals. You also need to upgrade your system I/O. That's where Adaptec® EZ-SCSI™ 4.0 software comes in.

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> –John C. Dvorak, *PC MAGAZINE*.**

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Publishing Myth #8:

You need a circulation the size of Tokyo to use QuarkXPress.

Myths about the exclusively "high-end" nature of QuarkXPress™ abound.

But just because QuarkXPress is the desktop publishing software choice for most magazines, newspapers, and design firms worldwide, don't assume it's more than you need. QuarkXPress is your logical choice, too, no matter what you're publishing.

QuarkXPress users like Fred Meyer, Inc., are proving it every day. Quark is the way to go even for in-house publications like Fred Meyer's annual report shown at right, which depicts the company's success in one-stop shopping. It's available on the platform your company knows and it's powerful enough to perform any publishing task — big or small. And, most importantly, QuarkXPress for Windows is easier to use than any other page layout application available — no matter what your level of expertise. Whether your name is Megalopolis Publishing Enterprises, Inc., or Donuts by Danny, QuarkXPress is for you.

Perhaps that's why so many pre-press service bureaus accept QuarkXPress files exclusively, frowning upon anything else.

If you don't need the extensive list of QuarkXPress features right off the bat, so what? At least you'll have room to breathe — and breathe easy.

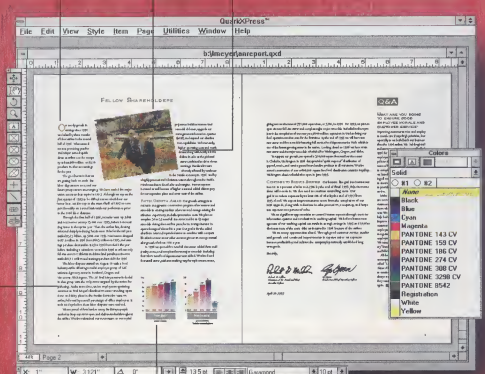
For a free demo version of QuarkXPress for Windows, and our 32-page *Comparison Guide to Electronic Publishing,* call 1-800-788-7835.

Pictures are easy to control. After this TIFF was imported, the creative department at Fred Meyer decided to rotate it. You can adjust the size, proportions, contrast, color, rotation, skew, and flipping (mirroring) of images by simply entering values in a palette.

Text runarounds are a snap. Text automatically flows perfectly around pictures and objects placed in the line of fire. But if you want to get crazy, you can edit the runaround path yourself, for any item.

Check out these awards. Because of its ease of use, extensive feature set, and professional reliability, QuarkXPress for Windows earned *PC Computing*'s MVP award in 1994 and Editor's Top Pick in 1995, *PC Magazine*'s Editor's Choice award in 1993 and '94, and *Home Office Computing*'s Editor's Pick for Windows 3.31 award in 1995.

Drop caps can be applied in two seconds. To apply this one, the folks at Fred Meyer merely clicked the Drop Cap check box in QuarkXPress and specified that one character drop two lines for the selected paragraph.



Column widths and sizes are fully customizable. You can create a set of columns of equal width by specifying the number of columns for an individual text box. Or you can create columns of different widths by linking multiple text boxes.

Complex color effects and alignment feats are no problem when you're using QuarkXPress. These charts may look as though they were created in an illustration program and then imported, but don't be fooled. These illustrations were created from scratch in QuarkXPress.

Not only does QuarkXPress support **Windows 95** — it also has "open architecture." In other words, third-party developers can create add-on software modules that seamlessly integrate into QuarkXPress to add entirely new features and tools to the application. Users can run several of these **XTensions** simultaneously.

EXCLUSIVE

QuarkXPress for Windows is now **bundled with a complimentary PhotoDisc Portfolio CD** for PC users, containing 220 of the most popular high-resolution stock photos.

PHOTODISC

QUARK

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Circle 143 on reader service card.

Missing Something from Windows 95...

An ATI GRAPHICS XPRESSION[1], WINTURBO[1], or GRAPHICS PRO TURBO[1] plug and play graphics card gives you the advanced graphics features Microsoft left out.

Designed for Microsoft Windows 95

Extended Windows 95 utilities

Get incredible full motion MPEG[2] video without expensive MPEG hardware for TV-like video. Play awesome arcade action games using ATI's accelerated DirectDraw™ drivers, that will make you forget Nintendo and Sega consoles.

Arcade Action Games

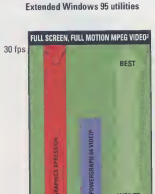
Ultra fast Windows 95 performance is built in, along with ATI's extended utilities like easy monitor control, virtual desktop and complete on-line help.

MPEG

Full Motion Video

And getting started is the easiest part, because ATI has worked closely with Microsoft to ensure the most stable and complete Windows 95 drivers in the industry.

Count on ATI's total support right from the start. Our Windows 95 trained representatives will give you fast, friendly and knowledgeable support.



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MODEL	WINTURBO
IDEAL FOR	Windows power user
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MEMORY	2MB VRAM
PRICE	From $349
MODEL	GRAPHICS PRO TURBO
IDEAL FOR	Professional
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Circle 158 on reader service card.

"TriSpectives…deserves the killer-app label!"

Stanford Diehl, **BYTE Magazine**, October 1995

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Designed for Microsoft Windows 95

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Manager Information Technology, Dana Corporation

TriSpectives — the New Standard for 3D — is the first full-powered 3D drawing program for Windows® 95. By combining **unprecedented 3D animation, illustration, and drawing** features, TriSpectives is the ideal companion to your office suite.

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- Develop high-impact 3D animations for presentations and multimedia projects.

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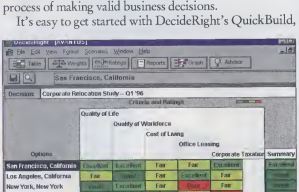
Circle 297 on reader service card.

DECISION-MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

DecideRight

For the dozens of mundane decisions you make every day—decaf or regular, white or wheat, AM or FM—Avantos's DecideRight is overkill, like swatting a mosquito with a baseball bat. But when you need to play ball and make big decisions—where to relocate the company, whom to hire, where to invest—you'll want DecideRight on your team. DecideRight automates the process of making valid business decisions.

It's easy to get started with DecideRight's QuickBuild, a wizard-like interview that steps you through the process: State the decision, select the options and criteria, then weigh the relative importance of everything on a graphical, linear scale. You can use DecideRight to reach consensus on a group decision by taking multiple perspectives into account. You can also run the same decision through different sets of assumptions as often as you wish.



Innovative as DecideRight is, there is still some room for improvement. We'd like to see an easy back-solving feature for assessing decisions that have already been made. There's a workaround for this, but it's neither obvious nor intuitive. OLE compliance would be a plus, too. But for a first version, Avantos has done a great job on DecideRight. The decision is yours; DecideRight just makes it easier.

RICH SCHWERIN

FILEBOX

DecideRight

Pros: Systematically lays out your options and provides a logical structure for big decisions.

Cons: Lacks a true back-solving feature to help justify decisions you already made.

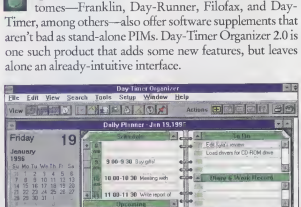
Verdict: A unanimous decision—buy!

$149 est. street price
Avantos Performance Systems
(800) 282-6867, (510) 654-4600
Reader Service No. 822

PERSONAL INFORMATION MANAGER

Day-Timer 2.0

Some folks swear by those leather-bound organizers that have a million inner pockets and take up more space than the clunkiest PDA. The makers of those tomes—Franklin, Day-Runner, Filofax, and Day-Timer, among others—also offer software supplements that aren't bad as stand-alone PIMs. Day-Timer Organizer 2.0 is one such product that adds some new features, but leaves alone an already-intuitive interface.



Day-Timer's printing options are as robust as its calendar and phone-book features. So you carry around your electronic updates in paper-based planners—or print to other planners, labels, and envelopes: Day-Timer also has a familiar three-ring-binder metaphor in its address list and phone book, and bubble help over every button. But what makes Day-Timer distinctive is that it can also act as a group scheduler.

Linking an expense, appointment, or note has always been simple with Day-Timer, but the new version also lets you attach files to items you've entered into the program. An ExpenseOrganizer has predefined categories, a Timeline narrows in on only date-related activities, and a Global List shows everything you've ever entered.

Our advice? Skip the leather-bound version—just get the software.

JAMES OLIVER CURY

FILEBOX

Day-Timer Organizer 2.0

Pros: Workgroup features in an easy-to-use product.

Cons: Paper-centric look and feel.

Verdict: A Day-Timer diehard? Get this software version and never buy the paper refills again.

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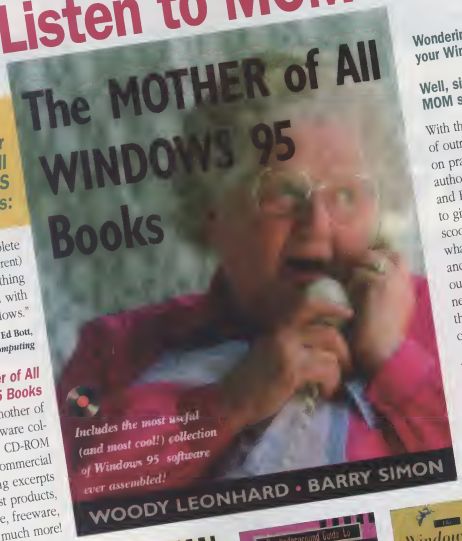

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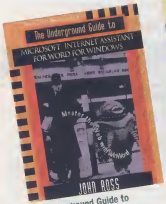

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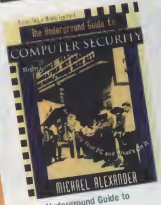

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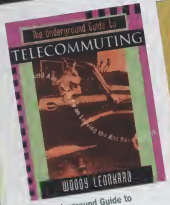

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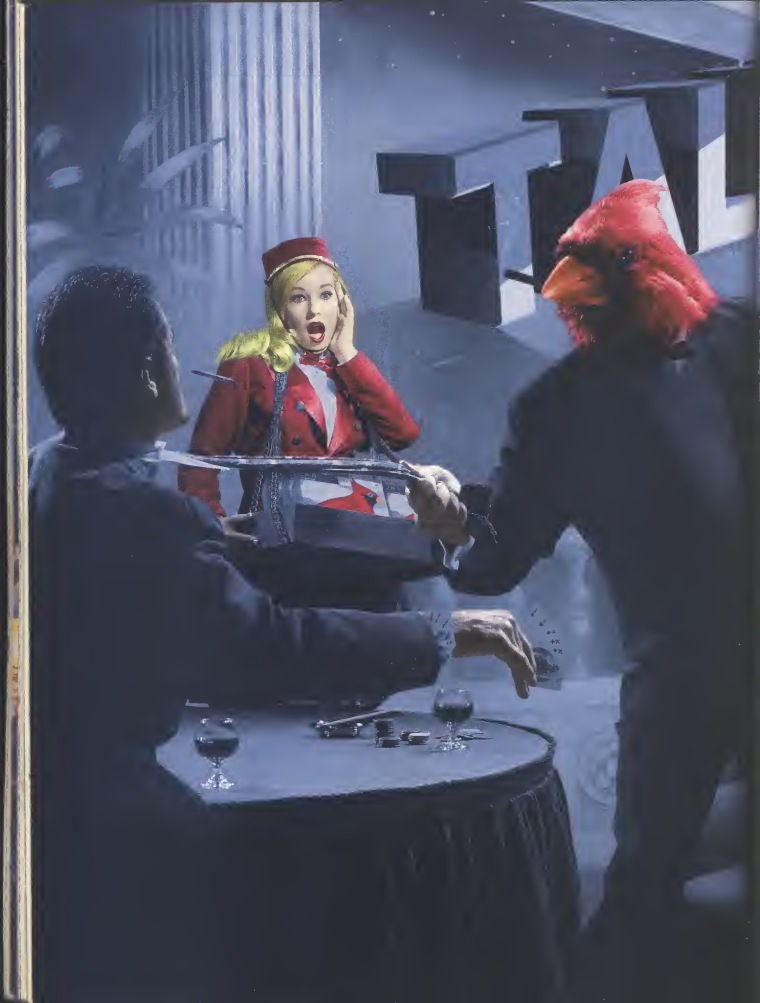

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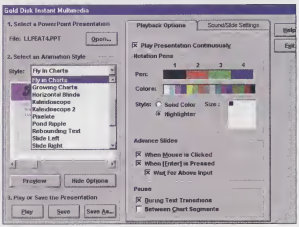

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FILEBOX

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Cons: Doesn't yet fully support PowerPoint for Windows 95.

Verdict: No one will sleep through your presentations.

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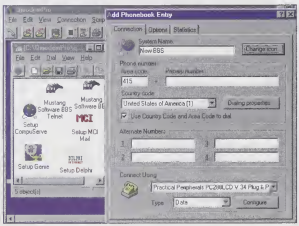
COMMUNICATIONS SOFTWARE

QmodemPro

There are lots of files online that you can download for free, but only if you have the right communications software. For fast, easy file downloads, you'll want a full-featured program like Mustang Software's QmodemPro for Windows 95.

QmodemPro includes a graphical phone book to organize all your frequently accessed BBS numbers. A Telnet client lets you log in and control another computer, and you can automate tasks by building macros with the included (but complex) script language. QmodemPro supports twice as many transfer protocols as Windows 95's built-in HyperTerminal utility.



Mustang has added support for a variety of application program interfaces (APIs). Support for the telephony API (TAPI) lets you share information with other TAPI applications, such as Microsoft's Exchange Fax. Support for the Messaging API (MAPI) lets you share messages with other MAPI applications, such as Lotus's cc:Mail.

The graphics viewer lets you see graphics while they're being received. It also lets you read BMP, GIF, and JPEG files, and includes image-editing tools such as zoom and crop.

If you connect to a BBS only once or twice a year, you can get by with Windows 95's HyperTerminal. If you're online more regularly, get QmodemPro. **RICH SCHWERIN**

FILEBOX

QmodemPro

Pros: Built-in phone book, graphics viewer.

Cons: Powerful but cryptic script language.

Verdict: A first-class communications program for Windows 95.

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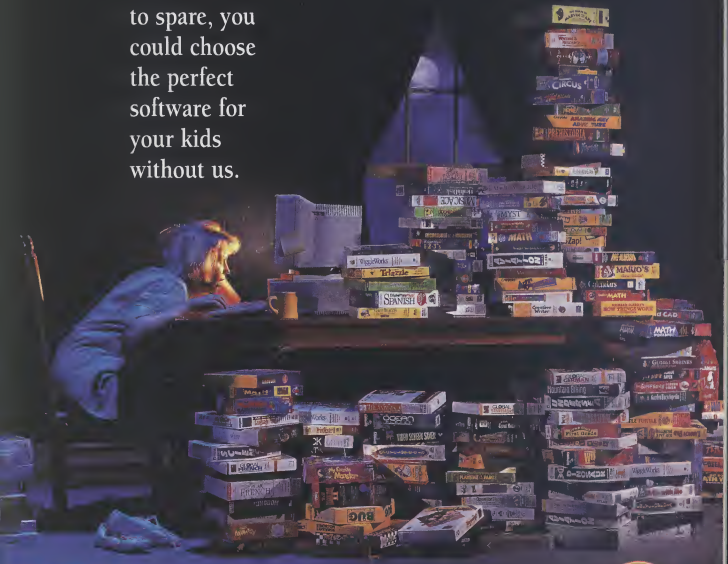

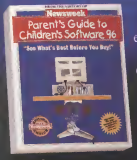

After all, it took thirty Newsweek writers and editors over six months to do it.

But we did it—with the help of a dozen smart kids. We clicked through nearly three hundred children's software titles selected from the thousands available, graded each one and awarded the top fifty the Newsweek Editors' Choice award.

Before you shop for children's software, you need the Newsweek Parent's Guide to Children's Software 96. It's the fun and easy-to-use CD-ROM that contains the world's first multimedia reviews of all fifty top titles — letting you experience the sound, video, animation and interactivity that makes each one work. (You'll also hear a lot more from those twelve smart kids.)

There's a special section for your children as well, with games, activities and a terrific nine-year-old host named Jazzie. There's also a 184-page book about children's software, packed with hundreds of report cards on all the titles we reviewed, presented with the crisp graphics and straightforward writing you expect from Newsweek. There's even an envelope filled with coupons worth more than six hundred dollars off top-name children's software.

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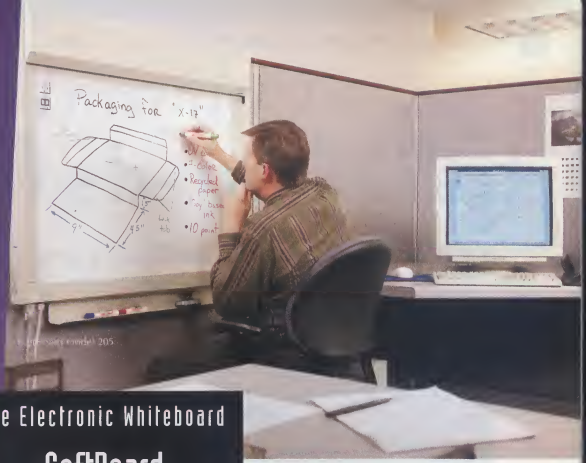

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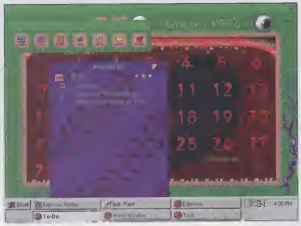
PERSONAL INFORMATION MANAGER

Expresso

Find personal information managers dull? Berkeley Systems, maker of those wacky screen savers, has just the thing to spice up your life: Expresso. It does more than keep you organized—it keeps you amused as well.

Choose from more than 20 calendar styles, each packed with zany, colorful animation and sounds. Themes range from the seasonal to the outrageous. It works like an entertaining screen saver—if your system idles too long, you're in for a few surprises. Don't be alarmed when your PC suddenly emits belches, heartbeats, or the sound of cows mooing.



Expresso isn't just a toy, though. Behind the engaging interface, you'll find standard PIM features such as scheduling, an address book, to-do lists, alarms, and even the ability to synchronize files on different systems.

Create appointments and contacts on the fly, and drag and drop information around your desktop—it's that easy. A Flashback icon also hovers in the corner of your screen so you can access Expresso instantly from any application with one mouse click.

Admittedly, Expresso is far from a power PIM. You won't find any group-scheduling features or Internet hooks, just an entertaining and easy-to-use PIM that'll add some kick to your day. LIESL LA GRANGE NOBLE

FILEBOX

Expresso

Pros: As easy to use as it is entertaining.

Cons: Distracting noise and graphics can be irritating.

Verdict: Getting organized has never been so much fun.

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MULTIMEDIA UTILITY

Backdrop

If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, and sounds like a duck, it must be multimedia, right? That's what Automedia would like you to think about Backdrop, a product billed as a "multimedia collection and presentation manager." In reality, Backdrop is little more than a sample collection of scanned photos, corny sounds, and a screen saver.

Backdrop puts a 21-button toolbar on your desktop. Shipping on four disks, it requires a whopping 9MB of disk space. It does offer some utilities, including an image editor, wallpaper, a sound editor, and a Web browser launcher.

Backdrop also offers a "presentation manager," but it only cycles through a selection of images and cannot create presentations. Another Backdrop utility keeps a hotlist of your favorite Web sites, but you have to copy or type in URL addresses by hand, making it inferior to most browser software.

Backdrop includes some interesting sounds, animations, and stock photos, but if you're looking for slick multimedia effects, you won't find them here. Backdrop's applications, photos, and wallpaper are limited—you'll find better utilities and graphics in Windows 95 or as shareware. Want real multimedia? Get a full-fledged graphics program like Micrografx's $299 ABC Graphics Suite. MARTY BEAUDET

FILEBOX

Backdrop

Pros: Adds wallpaper, screen saver, and sound options.

Cons: Offers little that cannot be found elsewhere for less—or free.

Verdict: Not the multimedia application it is claimed to be. Of little value to business or home users.

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"First Aid will kiss your desktop bruises away." —*Windows Magazine*

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on PageMaker 6.0.

k on a Sunday afternoon and you're finally crossing the last item off end's "to-do" list. Time to get physical, but the gym or a swim won't et outside for a walk—not a stroll around the block, or a neon and power push. It's time for rugged walking.

lk tough

servant trend-watcher knows that outdoor activity is booming, e boomingest activities is the pedestrian style. But what's only g noticed is that a majority of the millions of Americans now ctive outdoor lifestyles aren't "doing" anything out there. They're they're getting fit and enjoying the great outdoors. in the fitness boom and the outdoor recreation craze, s slipped the notice of most media," says Robert Hoffman, a ts on trail and river protection projects. people don't want to climb Kilamanjaro or strap walking weights to but they want to be outdoors after spending the better part of their ek stuck in an office or other indoor setting," says Hoffman. "A rugged walk in the outdoors [illegible] in a way that counting laps on a track or steps on a treadmill just can't compare.

> What's more, rugged walking, by definition, removes the specter of competition that typifies most newer forms of outdoor activity. For instance, rock climbing and mountain bicycling, two of the hottest recent [illegible] into the outdoor arena, are about accomplishing bigger and bigger challenges—a smoother rock face, a [illegible] ride. No knock against these adventurous sports, but for them it's [illegible] that drives the activity. For the rugged walker, the [illegible] in the same. Challenging terrain is embraced and enjoyed, o requirement.

ly, is rugged walking, and what's making it so popular? Two words.

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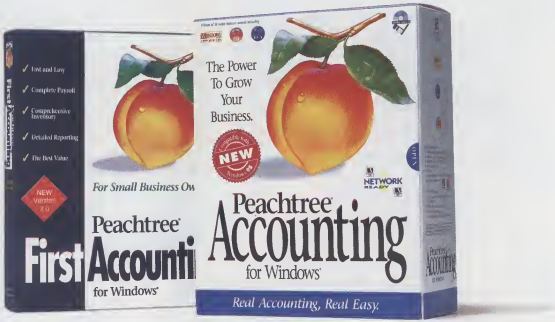

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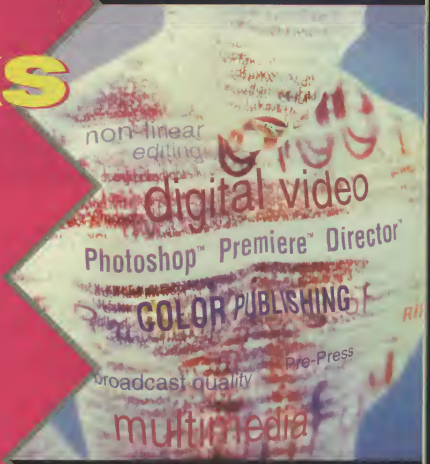

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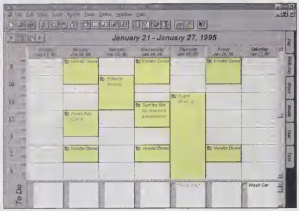
Up-to-Date

The problem: Most personal information managers require more work than all those random scraps of paper they're meant to replace. The result: Most people retire them to shelfware shortly after buying them. But not if they buy Now Software's Up-to-Date. A Windows 3.1 and Windows 95 version of the top-selling calendar app on the Mac, Up-to-Date is a networkable, feature-rich calendar and contact manager that's highlighted by its incredibly handy QuickAccess toolbar.



Did you get a call from a new customer? Pop open the floating QuickPad panel and add new contacts, appointments, or notes to your file without leaving your current application. Up-to-Date automatically adds all of the information to your calendar and contact list. Similarly, QuickContact and QuickDay keep you one click away from your contacts and daily schedule. Open Up-to-Date and you'll find complete calendar views and banners, sticky notes, and graphics.

Organize events and contact categories, and color-code them for easy recognition. Take it one step further and organize groups of categories into sets, such as personal and work. Mixed-platform workgroups can easily add shared contact and event categories to their personal files and schedule meetings based on available time slots. Close the app, and your information is still just a click away. **BOB O'DONNELL**

FILEBOX

Up-to-Date

Pros: Quick data entry and easy access to information.

Cons: So many elements! Abundance may be overwhelming.

Verdict: A powerful, networkable PIM that fits easily into any environment.

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(800) 722-5963, (503) 274-2810
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PAGING SOFTWARE

Reach Me

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You need to plan ahead a bit by giving your most important contacts a Reach Me floppy disk. All they have to do is load Reach Me on their systems, and tracking you down is as easy as sending e-mail. When someone wants to get a message to you, they just type any text in the pager window onscreen, hit send, and in seconds the message shows up on your pager.

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FILEBOX

Reach Me

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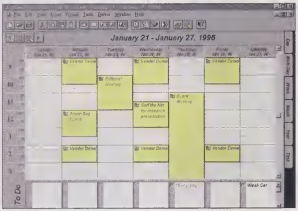

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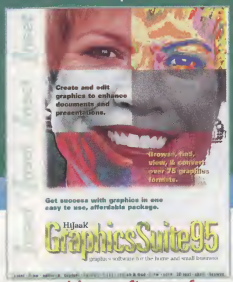

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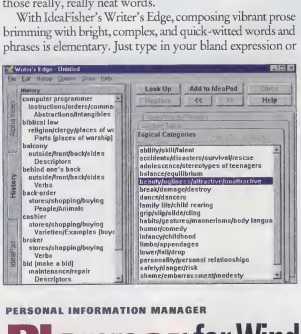
BRAINSTORMING SOFTWARE

Writer's Edge

Sometimes the report, presentation, or letter you're trying to write can get really, really boring and really, really repetitive, because even though you're really trying to do your best, you just can't seem to think of those really, really neat words.

With IdeaFisher's Writer's Edge, composing vibrant prose brimming with bright, complex, and quick-witted words and phrases is elementary. Just type in your bland expression or word and Writer's Edge does the brainstorming, letting you explore simple synonyms, topical categories, or excerpts from works by classic scribes such as Shakespeare, Milton, and Dr. Seuss. Writer's Edge helps you dress up your documents on a word-by-word basis, as opposed to a document-centric strategy.



FILEBOX

Writer's Edge

Pros: Ideal for brainstorming and exploring.

Cons: Never gives a simple solution to replace a single word.

Verdict: A creative spark for the compositionally challenged.

$40 est. street price
IdeaFisher Systems
(800) 289-4332
(714) 474-8111
Reader Service No. 830

Writer's Edge isn't perfect. The interface could be friendlier, and a single search often turns up so many possibilities that finding just the right word or phrase takes hours. It isn't a thesaurus; it's a brainstorming tool. The program includes a database of 65,000 ideas, words, phrases, clichés, and historical events that works as a stand-alone application or a plug-in to Microsoft's Word, Novell's WordPerfect, or Lotus's Word Pro.

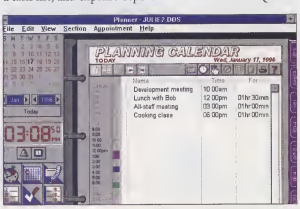
Writer's Edge is a great way to take your brain for a ride—and find some rich material while you're at it. JACK LYON

PERSONAL INFORMATION MANAGER

Planner for Windows

A personal information manager should make your life easier, and it should be yours to customize. Day Runner seems to have ignored these basic principles with its Planner for Windows, and created a PIM with features so complicated and inflexible, it left us longing for the simplicity of an old leather binder.

Fans of Day Runner's paper-based counterpart will recognize the interface. A desktop "binder" is divided by tabs into separate planning and event calendars, an address book, a task list, and expense-report files. Like Franklin Quest's Ascend and Microsoft's Schedule+, Planner for Windows has a navigation calendar to guide you through months and days, but it lacks the e-mail and group-scheduling capabilities of those competitors.



It also lacks usability and logic. You can enter new appointments into your schedule only through a confusing dialog box. Old appointments get crossed out with black lines. You can change the color of your binder or trash can, but try to maximize the expense-report window or move the toolbar, and you're out of luck.

Is Planner for Windows worth the hassle? If you're a Day Runner veteran, maybe. The program has a familiar format, and a print function makes it compatible with Day Runner paper planners. But if you're a new user or you rely exclusively on your electronic datebook, this PIM is a pain. JULIE McCULLOUGH

FILEBOX

Planner for Windows

Pros: Compatible with Day Runner paper planners.

Cons: Looking at sideways tabs strains your neck.

Verdict: Better than a pile of sticky notes, but it comes up short next to other comparably priced PIMs.

$49 est. street price
Day Runner
(800) 635-5544, (714) 680-3500
Reader Service No. 831

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System requirements: A PC equipped with a 386, 486, Pentium or equivalent processor • Windows 3.1 or 3.11, Windows for Workgroups 3.1 or 3.11, running in 386 enhanced mode • 4 MB RAM required, 8 MB RAM recommended • © 1995 Connectix Corporation. 2655 Campus Drive, San Mateo, CA 94403 USA • 800-950-5880 • 415-571-5100 • FAX: 415-571-5195 • For info. via FAX: 800-571-7258 • Web site: http://www.connectix.com • RAM Doubler is a trademark of Connectix Corporation • All other trademarks are the property of their respective holders

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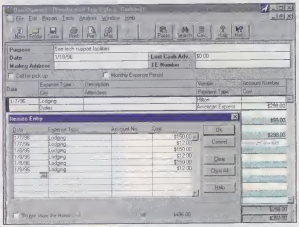
Circle 249 on reader service card

EXPENSE-REPORT SOFTWARE

QuickXpense 1.6

What? You're still filling in expense reports by hand? Whatever your reasons are for not doing expense reports electronically, they just don't cut it. QuickXpense 1.6 for Windows 95 is here, and filing electronic expense reports has never been easier.

Hate entering your hotel information, including all those superfluous taxes? Just type your arrival and check-out dates, nightly rate, taxes, and other recurring expenses in the new HotelXpert, and QuickXpense takes care of the rest, itemizing and calculating your hotel expenses.



If you're a GE Capital Corporate MasterCard customer, you can incorporate credit-card expenses into your expense report automatically. Forget trying to remember how much you tipped the waiter—QuickXpense accesses all of that detailed information and fills in the blanks for you. Of course, this feature benefits only users of the GE MasterCard. Now, if only Corporate American Express and Portable Software would reach the same agreement. . . .

QuickXpense offers forms that duplicate the expense-report forms of all Fortune 1000 companies. Portable Software also creates customized forms for $99, or free if you buy three copies of QuickXpense. So what's your reason for doing expenses by hand?

KYLA K. CARLSON

FILEBOX

QuickXpense 1.6 for Windows 95

Pros: Use the exact form your company requires.

Cons: Credit-card support is limited to GE MasterCard.

Verdict: With minimal effort, create expense reports that are neat and accurate every time.

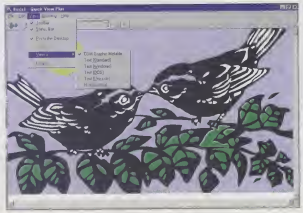
$69 est. street price
Portable Software Corp.
(800) 478-7411, (206) 637-8808
Reader Service No. 832

FILE-VIEWING UTILITY

QuickView Plus

Getting sick of the Choose the Program You Want to Use dialog box that pops up in Windows 95 every time you come across a new type of file? Inso's Quick View Plus has your number, letting you view just about any file type from Windows 95.

Supporting more than 200 file types, Quick View lets you view the contents of files created by virtually all major word processor, spreadsheet, database, and graphics programs without loading the original application. It's also a great tool for deciphering Internet files, with support for compressed files and HTML documents.



Here's how it works: When you happen across an unknown file, click on the right mouse-button to launch Quick View. Or drag the file onto the Quick View icon on your desktop. In addition to viewing files, you can print, copy, or even launch the file's original application if it's loaded on your system. One glitch is Quick View's inability to view some formatting. If you save a numbered outline in Word, for example, the numbers don't show up in Quick View.

A competing product, MasterSoft's Viewer95, offers almost the same features as Quick View, but can display more than one file simultaneously. It also costs a bit more, however. For a lightning-fast file viewer at a great price, Quick View Plus is your pick.

JACK LYON

FILEBOX

Quick View Plus for Windows 95

Pros: Quick, efficient, and cheap.

Cons: Can't display some intricate formatting, especially in HTML files.

Verdict: Lightning-fast viewing of more than 200 file formats.

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(617) 753-8500
Reader Service No. 833

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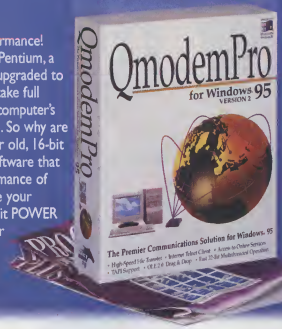

QmodemPro for Windows 95 is the first communication software that delivers all the features and performance you'll need to get the most from the new 32-bit Windows platform. And since you want dynamic features and ease of use, you'll love the fact that QmodemPro's communication and Internet capabilities go way beyond the standard terminal software included with Windows 95.

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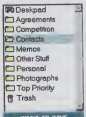

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The Next Generation: Notebook computers now offer all the power and features of desktop systems—fast Pentium processors, speedy CD-ROM drives, full stereo sound, massive storage capacities, and high resolutions on larger screens. Technical Director Adam Meyerson explains which processors and screen resolutions you'll need, and what kinds of battery and storage will support it all. **251**

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Premmia LX P/60 MX4/66d, 4/100T, P/60	8 Meg	500987 003	320 00
	16 Meg	501340-002	549 00
	32 Meg	500987-005	958 00
	64 Meg	501569-001	Call
Premmia 4133, 4133S, 4/50d, 4/60d	8 Meg	501159-002	338 00
Premmia SE 4/33, 4/66d, P/60	16 Meg	501159-003	658 00
Premmia MTE 4/33, 4/66d P/60	32 Meg	501159-004	1149 00
Manhattan G V Series Server	64 Meg	501159-005	2298 00
Power Premium 3/33, 4/33 4/33S, 4/50d 4/66d	8Meg	500780-001	378 00
Premium 486/25, 486/25E, 486/33, 486/33E			
Premium 386/33TE 486/25TE, 486/33TE			
Prem II 386/25 386/33 486/33 486 SX/20			
Bravo 486/25 486/33	2 Meg Kit	500780-005	118 00
Advantage 486/25 486/33 486/33P 486 SX/20			
Premium SE4/22	8Meg Kit	500780-001 } 64 pin	378 00
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Prem 386/33T, 386 SX16 Prem II 386SX.20 386/25	4Meg	500780-004	189 00
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	32Meg Kit/64Meg Kit	501567-001/501568-001	1359/2699
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1057035 (512K)	P/S1 286	49 00
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	1Meg Module	113646-001	79 00
	4Meg Module	112534-001	179 00
DeskPro 386/20E	1Meg Exp Bd	113644-001	149 00
DeskPro 386/25E	4Meg Exp Bd	113645-001	249 00
	1Meg Module	113131-001	79 00
	4Meg Module	113132 001	179 00
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	2Meg Module	118689-001	89 00
	4Meg Module	118690 001	159 00
	8Meg Module	128877-001	329 00
M Series Exp Bd	0 64Meg	129160-001	129 00
DeskPro 386/16	1-2Meg Exp Bd	108069-001	239 00
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T4400SX SXC T6400 T6600	4Meg	PC-PA2004U	189 00
T4400SX SXC T6400 T6600	8Meg	PC PA2005U	379 00
T4400SX SXC T6400 T6600	16Meg	PC-PA2010U	689 00
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T4500 C T4600, T4700 T1900, C, T1910, T1950 (3 3 v)	8Meg	PC PA2013U	349 00
T4500 C T4600 T4700, T1900, C, T1910, T1950 (3 3 v)	16Meg	PC-PA2014U	652 00
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T3400CT T2400, T3600	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg	PC-PA2019U	179/349/619
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ALR Venture	4Meg	12407980	249 00
Altima Virage	4 Meg/ 16 Meg		189/679
Altima Virage II	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		199/389/622
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AST Bravo 8 Explorer	4Meg/16Meg	501255-001, -002	189/639
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AST Notebook Prem Exec 386SX/20/25/25L	4Meg	500814-003	179 00
AST Power Exec 3/25C, 425EL, 425SL	4Meg/16Meg	501166 001 -003	189/629
AST Power Exec 4/33SL	4Meg/16Meg	501318-001 002	194/678
AT&T Globalyst 130	4Meg/8Meg		179/570
AT&T Globalyst 200	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		199/389/679
AT&T Safari NSX/20	4Meg	PEC 37651	259 00
Austin DX4, DX2, SX2, SX Series	4Meg/16Meg		199/699
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Epson ActionNote 880, 866c	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg/20Meg		179/359/679/799
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HP Omnibook 530, 600	4Meg/8Meg/12Meg		189/359/528
HP Omnibook 4000	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		199/379/648
Leading Edge Aviva 2000	4Meg/16Meg		179/639
Lexmark SE10	4Meg/8Meg		179/349
Magnavox Metalis	1Meg/4Meg	286, 386SX	109/169
Midwest Micro Elite SX-25 SX33, DX2 50 DX2-66	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		199/389/629
Midwest Micro Elite Sndbk SX33 DX2-50, DX4-75, DX4 100	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		199/389/629
Midwest Micro Elite Sndbk Plus D5-75 D5-90	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		199/389/629
NCR Safari 3180	4Meg/ 8 Meg		189/369
NEC Ultralite Versa E, V	4 Meg/8Meg/16Meg/20Meg	OP4104	183/359/619/799
NEC Versa Removable Hard Drive	540Meg/710Meg/810Meg		719/899/919/1159
NEC Versa S	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		179/359/629
NEC Versa 2000C & 2000D	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		189/379/799
Packard Bell 386SX 286	1Meg 4Meg	286 386SX	109/179
Packard Bell Statesman	2Meg/8Meg		109/329
Panasonic CF170 CF270 CF370	1Meg	CF-BA199	59 00
Panasonic CF380, CF480	2Meg/4Meg/6Meg		119/199/309
Panasonic CF-V21P CF-580	4Meg/16Meg		219/819
Panasonic CF-V41	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg/32Meg		219/419/692/1999
Sanyo 17/18 NB	2Meg	MBC-NBMEM2	109 00
Sharp 6781 6881 6785 6700, 6800 6741	2Meg/4Meg		109/179
Sharp 8150 8650, 8980 7700, 7760	4Meg/16Meg		199/679
Sharp 6700 & 6900	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		179/359/639
Sharp PC310 PC350, 3010 & 3050	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		179/359/639
TI Travelmate 2000	1Meg	2568034-0001	79 00
TI Travelmate 3000	2Meg	2566996-1	94 00
TI 4000, TI 4000E	4Meg/16Meg		199/768
TI 4000M	4Meg/16Meg		199/768
TI 5000 5100	8Meg/16Meg		319/799
TI Extensa	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		179/359/629
Tandy 1510 2810 3810	1Meg		49 00
Tandy 2820 3820 3830	2Meg/4Meg/6 Meg		119/199/309
Twinhead Altima, Compudyne 486SX DX Tandy 4860	4Meg/16Meg		179/639
Twinhead Slimnote 5	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		169, 379, 649
Ultra 486 TS30	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		189/369/629
Zeos 386SX Notebook (not the + version)	2Meg		109 00
Zenith Master Sport 386SX	2Meg	ZA-300-1	114 00
Zenith Master Sport SL SLE, 600, 620, 625NL	2Meg	ZA-4-4	104 00
Zenith Super Sport 286 286E	1Meg	ZA 180-66	99 00
286E, SX	2Meg	ZA 180-64	119 00
SX Alpha/SX Beta	2Meg	ZA-180-86/ZA-180-87	119.00
Zenith Z Note 425LN LNC, LNP	4/8/16Meg		190/379/619
Zenith Z-Star 4/33	2/8Meg		119/369

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MODEL	PRICE	MODEL	PRICE
S RAM Cards 1MEG	129	SCSI Type II	139
S-RAM Cards 2MEG	229	Audio Card	169
28 8/28 8 Data/Fax Modem	219	Multimedia Combo, Sound/SCSI	499
14 400/14,400 Data/Fax Modem	109	Panasonic KXL-D720 port CDRom player	339
Readwriter Card (15A Slot)	149	Type III 170 Mg Hard Drive	429
Lan Ethernet (Coax), (10 Base T)	99	Type III 260 Mg Hard Drive	529
5250 IBM Emulatin Card	495	Type III 340 Mg Hard Drive	629
		Xircom Combo Ethernet + Modem II 28 8 Adapter	549

FLASH MEMORY 2 Meg–99 00 6 Meg–229.00 10Meg–349 00 16Meg–529 00

LASER PRINTER MEMORY UPGRADES

AMOUNT UPGRADED	0K Bd	256k	1	2	3	3.5	4	5	6	8	16	32
Brother 630 631 641 645	–	–	89	135	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Canon LBP 430	–	–	69	–	–	–	167	–	–	–	–	–
Canon LBP 860	–	–	–	99	–	–	179	–	–	349	609	1249
Canon LBP4 4Lite, 4plus	–	–	129	179	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Epson 6000 Action Laser	–	–	–	129	–	–	229	–	–	–	–	–
Epson Action Laser 1100, 1600	–	–	69	89	–	–	189	–	–	379	599	–
Epson Action Laser II	–	–	89	–	206	–	–	327	–	–	–	–
Epson 8000 1600 4000 4100 4300	–	–	89		206	–	–	327	–	Call	Call	Call
Epson 1000, 1500, 5000, 5200	–	–	–	169	–	–	218	–	–	–	–	–
HP 2 2D–	–	–	–	89	–	–	179	–	–	–	–	–
HP 3 3D 3P, 2P 2P+	–	–	–	89	–	–	149	–	–	–	–	–
HP 4 4M 4SI, 4SIMX	–	–	–	69	–	–	149	–	–	349	–	–
HP 4P 4PLUS 4MP	–	–	–	–	–	–	146	–	–	289	–	–
HP 4L	–	–	50	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
HP 3SI	–	–	80	–	–	–	189	–	–	299	–	–
HP 4SI	–	–	–	89	–	–	155	–	–	299	–	–
HP 5L	–	–	–	–	–	–	219	–	–	399	–	–
HP 5P	–	–	–	89	–	–	155	–	–	305	539	–
HP Design Jet 600, 650 200	–	–	–	89	–	–	187	–	–	349	–	–
HP Deskjet 500 500C, 510 550,560	–	48	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
HP Deskjet 1200C 1200C/P	–	–	–	89	–	–	187	–	–	349	–	–
HP Laserjet	–	–	–	–	–	–	179	–	–	378	679	–
HP Paintjet XL300	89	–	–	–	–	–	248	–	–	428	837	–
IBM Laser 4019 4019E	–	–	–	–	–	169	–	–	–	–	–	–
IBM Laser 4029, 4037	–	–	–	–	–	–	169	–	–	–	–	–
IBM Laser 4039, 4079	–	–	–	99	–	–	169	–	–	350	–	–
Konica LP 3110	–	–	119	189	239	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Lexmark, Optra L LX, R, RX	–	–	–	–	–	–	139	–	–	339	639	1148
NEC 90 290	–	–	–	119	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
NEC 95, 97	–	–	–	89	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Oki 400	–	–	–	104	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Oki 400E, 400EX, 410E, 410EX	–	–	135	189	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Oki 830 840	–	–	–	109	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Packard Bell PB 9500	–	–	–	139	–	–	227	–	–	–	–	–
Packard Bell 9815	–	–	–	139	–	–	229	–	–	–	–	–
Panasonic 4420/4450I	–	–	–	129	–	–	229	–	–	–	–	–
Panasonic 4410/4430	–	–	–	129	–	–	199	–	–	–	–	–
Panasonic 4450	–	–	99	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Panasonic 4400/5400	–	–	89	129	–	–	229	–	–	–	–	–
Panasonic 4440 5410	–	–	89	129	–	–	229	–	–	–	–	–
Sharp 9400 9460 9600, 9700E	–	–	89	129	–	–	229	–	–	–	–	–
Sharp 9500 E, H, 9700 H	–	–	79	–	–	–	259	–	–	–	–	–
TI XL/PS17/PS35	–	–	49	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
TI Microlaser Pro E Powerpro Pro 600	–	–	99	130	–	–	229	–	–	429	–	–
TI Microwriter	–	–	79	156	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

HARD DISK DRIVES

CONNER			MAXTOR			WESTERN DIGITAL		
425MB	CPS 425A	$148	540MB	7540 AV	$169	540MB	AC2540	$175
540MB	CPS 540A	168	850MB	7850 AV	208	850MB	AC2850	215
850MB	CFS 850A	205	1 2GIG	71260 AV	286	1.2 GIG	AC31200	289
1 2 GIG	CFS 1275A	275				1 6 GIG	AC31600	369

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PENTIUM NOTEBOOKS

Portable PCs: Multimedia on the Go

Quiz time. Which of the following will you find in today's notebook computer? A 120MHz Pentium chip, 16MB of RAM, 1.2GB hard drive, large color display, double-speed or faster CD-ROM drive, 16-bit sound. Time's up. If you said all of the above, then you're on the cutting edge. The latest leaps in notebook technology deliver astonishing levels of performance and state-of-the-art multimedia.

Topping the list of performance gains is a boost in CPU power. The 75MHz Pentium is quickly becoming standard for entry-level notebooks. It delivers plenty of power for word processing, spreadsheets, and simple database work. For the more demanding portable office, look to the 90MHz Pentium. If you do presentations or intensive graphics work, go with the new breed of 120MHz Pentium notebooks.

To help multimedia come alive, look for built-in CD-ROM drives, 16-bit sound, and higher-resolution video. The CD-ROM drive should be at least double-speed and should be swappable with the floppy drive. For sound, insist on 16-bit stereo input and output (playback and capture capability) with Sound Blaster compatibility. Of course, keeping all this hardware running smoothly will require some serious battery power. Lithium ion is considered topflight—no other battery type lasts as long or charges as fast.

Video resolutions start at 640 by 480 pixels, and color depth can run from the low-end 256 colors to near–photo-quality 65,000 colors. Premium portables can display 800 by 600 pixels on their own LCD, and 1,024 by 768 via an external monitor. The minimum display size on your notebook should be 10.4 inches, but 11.3- and 12.1-inch displays will soon become standard. Dual-scan displays are acceptable for everything but the most critical presentations, which require the more impressive active-matrix displays.

All of this multimedia power will require serious storage, too; 500MB hard drives are now at the low end of portable storage, with many units offering 1GB and 1.2GB hard drives. ADAM MEYERSON

NOTEBOOK COMPUTERS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SPEEDY PENTIUM PROCESSORS

Processor: 75MHz to 120MHz Pentium.

RAM: 8MB or more.

CD-ROM Drive: Double-speed or better.

Sound: 16-bit stereo input and output with Sound Blaster compatibility.

Video Resolution: 640 by 480 pixels at 65,000 colors.

Hard Drive: 500MB or larger.

Pointing Device: Trackpoint, trackball, or touch pad.

Expansion Slots: Two PC Card Type-II slots.

Features and Options: 16MB of RAM, 800-by-600 video resolution, 11.3- or 12.1-inch display, built-in modem, 1GB hard drive, infrared transceiver, docking station, lithium-ion battery, and carrying case.

Usability: Keyboard 90 percent of a full-size desktop keyboard; 4 hours of battery life with power management; total traveling weight of 12 pounds (7 pounds for subnotebooks).

Windows 95 Considerations: Get a guarantee that the system is fully Windows 95–compatible. A Plug and Play BIOS is a good start, but other components like the video chip and disk controller must be compatible as well, to avoid using real-mode drivers.

Direct to You SPEC WATCH: Don't Settle for Less Than These Specs

HIGH-END DESKTOP SYSTEMS

CPU: 90MHz to 133MHz Pentium.

RAM: 16MB.

Secondary CPU Cache: 256K.

Display: 17-inch, 1,024 by 768 at 72Hz or higher refresh rate.

Video Card: 64-bit PCI graphics, 2MB of VRAM or WRAM, 72Hz or higher refresh.

Hard Drive: 1GB EIDE or SCSI-2.

Bus: Six slots including two PCI.

Features and Options: 16-bit Sound Blaster–compatible sound card, four available half-height 5.25-inch drive bays, 21-inch monitor, graphics accelerator with 4MB of RAM, six-speed CD-ROM drive.

Usability: Flash BIOS for easy upgrades, tool-free cover removal, upgradable CPU socket, easy access to SIMMs.

Windows 95 Considerations: A Plug and Play BIOS lets Windows 95 reconfigure motherboard resources if a conflict arises. Even without a Plug and Play BIOS, Windows 95 can detect resources and reconfigure a Plug and Play peripheral. Note that many Plug and Play BIOSs came out long before Windows 95. Check your BIOS date and upgrade it if a newer version is available.

ENTRY-LEVEL DESKTOP SYSTEMS

CPU: 75MHz Pentium.

RAM: 8MB expandable to 32MB, 72-pin SIMMs.

Secondary CPU Cache: 256K.

Display: 15-inch, 800 by 600 at 72Hz or higher refresh rate.

Video Card: 64-bit graphics accelerator, 1MB of DRAM, 72Hz or higher refresh rate at all resolutions.

Hard Drive: 500MB EIDE.

Bus: Six slots including two PCI.

Features and Options: 16-bit Sound Blaster–compatible sound card, four available 5.25-inch drive bays, 2MB of memory on graphics accelerator.

Usability: Flash BIOS for easy upgrades, tool-free cover removal, upgradable CPU socket, easy access to SIMMs.

Windows 95 Considerations: A Plug and Play BIOS lets Windows 95 reconfigure motherboard resources if a conflict arises. Even without a Plug and Play BIOS, Windows 95 can detect resources and reconfigure a Plug and Play peripheral. Note that many Plug and Play BIOSs came out long before Windows 95. Check your BIOS date and upgrade it if a newer version is available.

HARD DISK DRIVES

Performance: 13ms or faster vendor-rated average access time. If vendor reports performance as average seek time, look for 10ms or faster.

Cache or Buffer: 256K.

Capacity: 500MB or greater.

Size: Half-height 3.5-inch for 1GB and smaller, half-height 5.25-inch for 1GB to 2GB, full-height 5.25-inch for 2GB and larger.

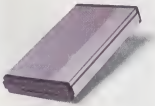
Interface: EIDE or SCSI-2.

Features and Options: Mounting rails, cables, minimum three-year warranty—minimum five-year warranty for 2GB and larger disks. Partitioning software, setup software for older BIOSs that don't support 1GB drives.

Usability: All jumpers labeled in English, documentation detailing jumper functions.

Windows 95 Considerations: Both IDE (Enhanced and standard) and SCSI-2 are well supported. Partition size is still limited to 2.1GB.

MODEMS



Transmission Rate: 14.4Kbps for small file downloads; 28.8Kbps for large file downloads, Internet access, and remote control/remote access.

Supported Standards: Data speed of V.32bis for 14.4Kbps, or V.34 for 28.8Kbps. Error correction of V.42; data compression of V.42bis; CCITT Group 3 Class 1, Class 2, and CAS (fax).

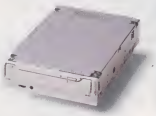
Compatibility: Hayes AT command set.

Features and Options: Integrated voice, data, and fax; onboard digital signal processor (DSP); 16550 UART on internal modems. For external modems, get a fast I/O card with the 16550 UART chip.

Usability: LCD readout on external models, Windows software with support for Zmodem, Ymodem, Xmodem, and Kermit. Built-in scripts for CompuServe and MCI. Support for calling cards. Software setup on internal modems (no jumpers).

Windows 95 Considerations: Windows can automatically detect most of today's modems without requiring any special features.

CD-ROM DRIVES



Access Time: 200ms.

Transfer Rate: 600KBps (quad-speed drive).

Cache: 64K on drive.

Interface: EIDE or SCSI-2.

Compatibility: High Sierra and ISO-9660, CD-Audio and Kodak Photo CD (for still photography) with multisession support (MPC 2).

Audio: Output jack and volume control.

Features and Options: CD changer holding two or more CDs, six-speed.

Usability: No CD caddy required, double doors to keep out dust, external controls for audio CDs.

Windows 95 Considerations: For optimum performance, make sure that Windows 95 protected-mode drivers are available. CD-ROM drives with real-mode drivers offer poor performance under Windows 95.

SOUND CARDS

Compatibility: Sound Blaster.

Mode: Stereo.

Sampling Capability: 8- and 16-bit record and playback at 44.1kHz.

Synthesizer: Wavetable, or FM with Wave option.

Voices: 16 simultaneous in Sound Blaster mode, 24 in Roland.

Ports: Speaker, microphone, and joystick.

Features and Options: Programmable digital signal processor (DSP), SCSI or EIDE port for a CD-ROM drive, QSound Virtual Audio, microphone, headset, and powered speakers.

Usability: Software configurable (no jumpers), bundled software for speech-to-text and command control.

Windows 95 Considerations: Plug and Play support lets Windows 95 automatically identify sound cards and reconfigure them if necessary. In some cases, even non–Plug and Play sound cards may be identified, but they must be reconfigured manually.

Circle 153 on reader service card.

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IDE Hard Drives

Western Digital built this IDE 1.6GB to fly–and now it's priced to really move!

Fast ATA Caviar

WESTERN DIGITAL

Western Digital 1620MB Enhanced IDE Hard Drive

Get performance and flexibility a step above Fast ATA! This big 1620MB enhanced IDE drive offers you a fast access time of only 10ms with its 5,200RPM spindle speed.. Also features a large 128K cache, and it fits storage bays 3.5" 1"H. Comes complete with full hardware and detailed mounting instructions. It's the one enhanced IDE drive that's ideal for all your storage needs—now at Insight's lowest price ever.

IDE Hard Drives

Capacity**	Access	Form/Height	Interface	Cache	RPM	Model	Bare Kit	16 Bit Kit
WESTERN DIGITAL								
635MB	10ms	3.5" 1"H	Enhanced IDE	64	4,500	WD2635A	$179	$229*
850MB	10ms	3.5" 1"H	Enhanced IDE	64	4,500	WD2850A	199	249*
1080MB	10ms	3.5" 1"H	Enhanced IDE	128	5,200	WD2160Ø0A	235	285*
1280MB	10ms	3.5" 1"H	Enhanced IDE	64	4,500	WD3120Ø0A	269	319*
1620MB	10ms	3.5" 1"H	Enhanced IDE	128	5,200	WD3160Ø0A	355	405*
Seagate								
545MB	14ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast-ATA	120	3,811	ST3660A	$169	$219*
722MB	12ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast-ATA-2	256	4,500	ST3780A	179	229*
854MB	11ms	3.5" .75"H	Fast-ATA-2	256	5,400	ST5850A	209	259*
1080MB	10.5ms	3.5" .75"H	Fast-ATA-2	256	5,400	ST51Ø8ØA	229	279*
2167MB	10.5ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast-ATA-2	256	5,400	ST32140A	*New! Call for pricing*	
2.5" Hard Drives								
420MB	16ms	2.5" 12.7MM	Fast-ATA-2	120	4,500	ST9420AG	$299	N/A
810MB	16ms	2.5" 19MM	Fast-ATA-2	120	4,500	ST9816AG	449	N/A
Seagate and the Seagate Logo are Registered Trademarks of Seagate Technology, Inc								
FUJITSU								
545MB	14ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast-ATA-2	64	4,500	FJ1612A	$159	$179*
1090MB	12ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast-ATA-2	64	4,500	FJ1614A	215	265*
Quantum								
850MB	14ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast-ATA-2	128	4,500	QUTR85Ø0A	$209	$259*
1080MB	12ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast-ATA-2	128	5,400	QUFB10Ø8ØA	235	285*
1280MB	12ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast-ATA-2	128	5,400	QUFB128ØA	259	309*
Maxtor®								
540MB	12ms	3.5" 1"H	Enhanced IDE	32	3,600	MX754ØAV	$179	$229*
850MB	12ms	3.5" 1"H	Enhanced IDE	64	3,600	MX785ØAV	205	255*
1260MB	12ms	3.5" 1"H	Enhanced IDE	256	4,500	MX7126ØAV	260	310*
1620MB	11ms	3.5" 1"H	Enhanced IDE	256	4,500	MX71626A	349	399*
CONNER								
635MB	14ms	3.5" 1"H	Enhanced IDE	32	3,600	CFS635A	$185	$235*
850MB	14ms	3.5" 1"H	Enhanced IDE	32	3,600	CFS850A	199	249*
1275MB	14ms	3.5" 1"H	Enhanced IDE	32	3,600	CFS1275A	259	309*
IBM								
540MB	12ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast-ATA	256	4,500	IB06H7141	$185	$205*
1080MB	10.5ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast-ATA	512	5,400	IB04G3186	269	319*

*Bundled with GSI Model 21 EIDE Accelerator **Capacities based upon manufacturer's quoted capacity where 1MB = 1,048,756 bytes

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Want high capacity and high performance? This Seagate Barracuda Fast SCSI-2A/V drive offers you plenty of both. You get a whopping 4294MBs of storage capacity. Plus a fast access time of only 8ms with spindle speeds up to 7,200 RPM. Fits standard 3.5" storage bays, and comes complete with all mounting hardware and easy-to-follow instructions. Step up to this big, fast Seagate hard drive today!

SCSI Hard Drives

Capacity**	Access	Form/Height	Interface	Cache	RPM	Model	Bare Kit	16 Bit Kit
Seagate								
1050MB	9ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	5,411	ST31231N	$375	$475
1080MB	10.5ms	3.5" .75"H	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	256	5,400	ST51080N	*New! Call for pricing*	
2147MB	9ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	5,411	ST32430N	699	799
4294MB	9ms	3.5" HH	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	5,411	ST15230N	959	1,059
9090MB	11ms	5.25" FH	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	1,024	5,400	ST410800N	2,299	2,399
High Performance Barracuda Drives								
2147MB	8ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	7,200	ST32550N	$829	$929
4294MB	8ms	3.5" HH	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	1,024	7,200	ST15150N	1,249	1,349
FUJITSU								
540MB	10ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	256	5,400	FJ1603S	$190	$290
1080MB	10ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	256	5,400	FJ1606S	275	375
2100MB	8.9ms	3.5" HH	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	7,200	FJ2915S	699	799
4200MB	8.9ms	3.5" HH	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	7,200	FJ2934S	999	1,099
68 Pin Wide SCSI Drives								
2100MB	8.9ms	3.5" HH	Wide Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	7,200	FJ2915W	$759	N/A
4200MB	8.9ms	3.5" HH	Wide Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	7,200	FJ2934W	1,049	N/A
MICROPOLIS								
AV Gold Series Drives								
2100MB	8.5ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	7,200	MC4221AV	$839	$939
4300MB	8.5ms	3.5" HH	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	7,200	MC3243AV	1,139	1,239
9100MB	12ms	5.25" FH	Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	5,400	MC1991AV	2,139	2,239
68 Pin Wide SCSI Drives								
2100MB	8.5ms	3.5" 1"H	Wide Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	7,200	MC4221AVW	$949	N/A
4300MB	8.5ms	3.5" HH	Wide Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	7,200	MC3243AVW	1,249	N/A
9100MB	12ms	5.25" FH	Wide Fast SCSI-2 A/V	512	5,400	MC1991AVW	2,229	N/A
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2150MB	8ms	3.5" 1"H	Fast SCSI-2	1,024	7,200	QUXP3125S	799	899
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**Capacities based upon manufacturer's quoted capacity where 1MB = 1,048,756 bytes.

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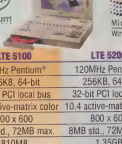

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Official rules

Drawings will be conducted every Friday, and entries must be received the Wednesday before to be eligible for that week's drawing Entries will be carried forward for the remaining weekly drawings of the contest Each time you place an order, you are automatically entered to win. Or, you can mail in an entry, using the convenient form on the back of this catalog or a 3" x 5" piece of paper All entries must include your name, company name (if any), address including zip code, and your daytime phone number Entries must be mailed in a hand-addressed #10 (business size) envelope, with sufficient first class postage affixed Limit one entry per envelope, mechanically reproduced entries will be disqualified

Mail your entry to: ***CDW Computer Centers, Inc., Compaq Direct Giveaway, 1020 E. Lake Cook Rd., Buffalo Grove, IL 60089***

CDW Computer Centers, Inc. will not be responsible for late, misdirected, lost, mutilated, destroyed or illegible entries Winners will be selected in a random drawing Prizes will be awarded and winners notified by mail Potential winners must respond to the notification within 15 days of mailing Failure to respond within the 15 day period may result in disqualification and an alternate winner may be selected Prize notifications returned as undeliverable will result in disqualification The approximate retail value of each prize is $2000 Odds of winning will be determined by the number of eligible entries received All prizes will be awarded Winners must be U S residents and at least 21 years of age at the time of entry

Employees of CDW and their immediate family members are not eligible This contest is void where prohibited by law Winner may not make any transfer or substitution of the awarded prize Applicable federal, state and local taxes are the sole responsibility of the winner All federal, state and local laws apply Participants in this promotion agree to be bound by the official rules and decision of the judges For a list of winners, after February 15, 1996, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) to

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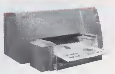

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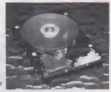

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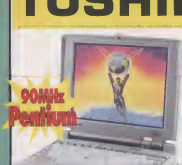

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120MHz Pentium with PCI bus

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- Pentium 120MHz processor – fastest available on a notebook!
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- Multimedia docking station with PCI bus (optional accessory, priced separately)
- Built-in 16-bit sound, microphone, **2 speakers** & MIDI
- **HUGE**, 1.13GB hard drives

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
Pentium 120	11.3" Dual Scan	1.13GB	$4679
Pentium 120	11.3" Active	1.13GB	5949

Tecra 700

Satellite Pro 410

Satellite Pro 400 & Satellite Pro 410

- Built-in 4X CD-ROM Drive (Swap floppy & CD-ROM) (Active models only – optional on Dual Scan)
- Built-in 16-bit sound, microphone, speaker & MIDI
- EDO RAM memory, exp. to 40MB (Sat. Pro 410 only)
- Built-in AC adapter - small, sleek design & reduced weight
- Integrated Accupoint - small, accurate & easy to use
- Lithium Ion battery technology
- Built-in infrared for wireless communications

Satellite Pro 400

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
Pentium 75	10.4" Dual Scan	772MB	$2999
Pentium 75	10.4" Active	772MB	3999

Satellite Pro 410

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
Pentium 90	11.3" Dual Scan	772MB	$3499
Pentium 90	11.3" Active	772MB	4679

Portégé 610CT

- Pentium 90MHz processor
- 9.5" True Color display for optimum color
- Built-in 16-bit sound (SoundBlaster Pro compatible), microphone & speaker
- Lithium Ion battery technology
- Accupoint stick for easy control

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
Pentium 90MHz	9.5" True Color	720MB	$3939

Satellite 2110/2130

Satellite 2110/2130

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
486DX4/75	10.4" Dual Scan	330MB	$1679
486DX4/75	10.4" Dual Scan	500MB	1969
486DX4/75	10.4" Active	500MB	2499

IBM®

ThinkPad® 365CD

ThinkPad® 365

- 10.4" Active (64K colors) & 10.4" Dual Scan
- Built-in infrared for no-hassle printer connections
- Multimedia models include built-in 2X CD-ROM, SoundBlaster compatible audio, speaker, micro phone & MIDI/joystick port
- MS Windows 95 or Selecta System models available

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
486DX4/75	10.4" Dual Scan	540MB	$1999
486DX4/75	10.4" Active	540MB	2599
486DX4/75	10.4" Dual Scan	540MB	2499*
486DX4/75	10.4" Active	540MB	3099*

*Multimedia Models

ThinkPad® 760

- Pentium 90 & 120MHz with 32-bit local bus
- 12.1" Active displays with 800x600 resolution (selected models)
- 4X CD-ROM Drive, MPEG-2 support, & full motion video (ThinkPad760CD only *)
- Built-in 28.8 fax/modem
- SoundBlaster-compatible audio & telephony
- Lithium Ion battery technology
- MS Windows or Selecta System models available

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
Pentium 90	10.4" Active	720MB	$5349
Pentium 90	12.1" Active	720MB	6049
Pentium 120	12.1" Active	720MB	6599
Pentium 90	12.1" Active	1.2GB	7449*

*Features built-in CD-ROM drive

ThinkPad® 760

COMPAQ

Contura 420/430

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
486DX4/75	10.4" Dual Scan	420MB	$2089
486DX4/75	10.4" Active	420MB	$2559
486DX4/100	10.4" Dual Scan	720MB	$2369
486DX4/100	10.4" Active	720MB	$2939

LTE 5000 Series

- Up to 120MHz Pentium power w/PCI bus & 256KB cache
- 32-bit PCI Local bus graphics
- 8MB RAM exp. to 72MB
- Built-in 16-bit sound, microphone & **2 speakers**
- MultiStay – holds CD-ROM, 2nd HDD, Floppy, or 2nd battery
- Up to 1.35GB hard drives (2.7GB max. capacity)
- Built-in infrared for wireless communications
- Supports NiMH & Lithium Ion batteries (up to 8 hrs.)
- Optional MPEG and TV video adapter

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
Pentium 75	10.4" Dual Scan	510MB	$3799
Pentium 75	11.3" Dual Scan	810MB	4439
Pentium 75	10.4" Active	810MB	4729
Pentium 90	10.4" Active	810MB	5339
Pentium 90	10.4" Active	810MB	5599*
Pentium 120	10.4" Active	1.35GB	6379

*Features Built-In CD-ROM drive

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NEC Versa 2000

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
486DX4/75	9.5" Active	350MB	$2099
486DX4/75	9.5" Active	350MB	$2399
486DX4/75	9.5" Active	540MB	$2599

*14.4 fax/modem not built-in

NEC Versa 4000

- Built-in CD-ROM Drive! (Standard on some models, optional on others)
- Pentium 75 and Pentium 90 processors
- 256KB Level 2 Cache to optimize performance
- Unbelievable displays – 65K color Dual Scan, 16.8 million color Active (High resolution Active Matrix displays available – 800x600 res.)
- Built-in 16-bit sound, microphone, MIDI and **2 built-in speakers**
- Multimedia docking station with outstanding Altec Lansing 4 speaker array (optional accessory, priced separately)

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
Pentium 75	10.4" Dual Scan	540MB	$3499
Pentium 75	10.4" Dual Scan	540MB	3799*
Pentium 75	10.1" Active	540MB	3999
Pentium 90	10.1" Active	810MB	4649*
Pentium 90	10.4" High Res.	810MB	4799

*Features built-in CD-ROM drive

Call about NEC Ready Multimedia Computers

NEC Versa 4000

HEWLETT PACKARD

HP OmniBook 600

- Weighs **ONLY 3.8 pounds!**
- Built-in 16-bit sound, microphone & speaker (active model only)
- Built-in Infrared for no-hassle printer connections
- Lithium Ion battery technology (active model only)
- Instant "ON" ready-to-work state – lasts for months on a charge

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
486DX4/75	9.5" Dual Scan	340MB	$2539
486DX4/75	9.5" Active	340MB	2999

HP OmniBook 600 NoteBook PC

HP OmniBook 5000

- Pentium 90MHz with 32-bit PCI Local bus
- 1.2GB drives available for high capacity storage
- High resolution – 800x600 resolution on notebook display
- Built-in 16-bit sound, microphone & speaker

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
Pentium 90	10.4" Active	1.2GB	$5329*
Pentium 90	10.4" Active	1.2GB	5889*
Pentium 120	10.4" Active	1.2GB	6539*

*16MB RAM standard

90MHz & 120 MHz Pentium with PCI bus

WIN95 INSTALLED

HP OmniBook 5000 NoteBook PC

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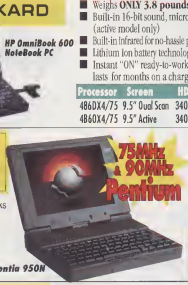
75MHz & 90MHz Pentium



Ascentia 950N

Ascentia 950N

- 75MHz and 90MHz Pentium - for blazing performance
- 10.4" Active & Dual Scan
- High Res. displays - 800x600 res. on notebook
- Built-in 16-bit sound, microphone & speaker
- Lithium Ion battery technology
- Built-in infrared for no-hassle printer connections

Call about AST Advantage Multimedia, Bravo Desktops & Manhattan PC Servers

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
Pentium 75	10.4" Dual Scan	500MB	$2639
Pentium 75	10.4" Dual Scan	800MB	2879
Pentium 75	10.4" Dual Scan	1.2GB	3249
Pentium 75	10.4" Active	800MB	3799
Pentium 75	10.4" Active	1.2GB	4199
Pentium 90	10.4" Dual Scan	800MB	3259
Pentium 90	10.4" Dual Scan	1.2GB	3639
Pentium 90	10.4" Active	800MB	4199
Pentium 90	10.4" Active	1.2GB	4579
Pentium 120	11.8" Active	1.2GB	CALL

NEW 120MHz Pentium Model!!

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS

TravelMate 5200

- Pentium 120MHz w/PCI bus
- 10.4" Active Matrix
- 1.2GB Hard Drive

NEW!

Only $5099

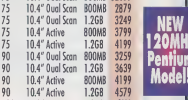
Extensa 550/550CD

Extensa 550 as low as **$2449***

NEW!

Processor	Screen	HD	Price
Pentium 75	10.4" Dual Scan	524MB	$2449*
Pentium 75	10.4" Dual Scan	524MB	2939
Pentium 75	10.4" Active	524MB	3519

*CD-ROM Drive is an optional accessory on this model.



Extensa 550CD

75MHz Pentium with PCI BUS

HEWLETT PACKARD

NEW!

HP DeskJet 340 $289.99

Circle 147 on reader service card.

HP LaserJet Printers

HP LaserJet 5P printer (18M, 6ppm, 600dpi)	$879.99
HP LaserJet 5L printer (18M, 4ppm, 600dpi)	479.00

HP InkJet Printers

HP DeskJet 340 printer (portable)	$289.99
HP DeskJet 600 printer	289.99
HP DeskJet 600C printer	299.00
HP DeskJet 660C printer	389.99
HP DeskJet 660Cse printer	399.00*
HP DeskJet 855C printer	499.00
HP DeskJet 1600C printer	1349.99

Home Office Products

HP OfficeJet	$599.99
HP OfficeJet LX	689.99
HP FAX-700	549.99

*Includes Family Font Package

HP LaserJet 5L $479.00

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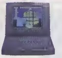

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950N Pentium® 75
8/500MB Dual
$2635 $2600

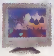
	ELP	BCP
950N Pentium® 75 8/800MB Dual	$2880	$2850
950N Pentium® 75 8/1200MB Dual	3280	3250
950N Pentium® 90 8/800MB Dual	3280	3250
950N Pentium® 90 8/1200MB Dual	3635	3600
950N Pentium® 75 8/1200MB Active	4240	4200
950N Pentium® 90 8/1200MB Active	4590	4550
IBM		
701CS 4/75 8/540MB Active	$3335	$3300
701C 4/75 8/540MB Active	3890	3850
755CX Pentium® 75 8/540MB Active	4690	4650
755CX Pentium® 75 8/810MB Active	5040	5000
755CD Pentium® 75 8/810MB CD Act.	5240	5200
760C Pentium® 120 8/720MB 12 1" Act.	6440	6400
760CD Pentium® 90 8/1200MB 12 1" Act.	7250	7200
NEC		
2000D 4/75 4/350MB Dual	$1905	$1880
2000C 4/75 4/350MB Active	2175	2150
2000C 4/75 8/540MB Active	2650	2630
4000D Pentium® 75 8/540MB Dual	3330	3300
4000D Pentium® 75 8/540MB/CD Dual	3640	3600
4050CD Pentium® 90 8/810MB/CD Act.	4550	4500
4080H Pentium® 120 8/1000MB Active	5350	5300
TEXAS INSTRUMENTS		
Extensa 450 DX4/75 4/340MB Dual	$1770	$1730
Extensa 550 P/75 8/524MB Dual	2430	2400
Extensa 550CD P/75 8/524MB/CD Dual	2910	2880
Extensa 550CDT P/75 8/524MB/CD Act	3490	3450
TM5100 Pentium® 90 8/1200MB Active	4650	4600
TM5200 Pentium® 120 8/1200MB Active	5050	5000
TOSHIBA		
T2110CS 4/75 4/330MB Dual	$1699	$1679
T2130CS 4/75 8/500MB Dual	1999	1979
T400CS Pentium® 75 8/810MB Dual	2999	2949
T410CS Pentium® 90 8/810MB Dual	3530	3499
T400CDT P/75® 8/810MB/CD Active	3999	3949
T410CDT P/90® 8/810MB/CD Active	4699	4650
T700CS Pentium® 120 8/1200MB Dual	4650	4600
T700CT Pentium® 120 16/1200MB Act.	5750	5700

MULTIMEDIA

DIAMOND
Multimedia Kit
8000
$555 $540

	ELP	BCP
Multimedia Kit 7000	$360	$350
CREATIVE		
Sound Blaster AWE32 PNP	$225	$215
Discovery CD 4X Internal	325	315
Blaster CD 4X IDE Internal	180	175
NEC		
6XE External 6X Speed	$560	$550
6XI Internal 6X Speed	450	440
PLEXTOR		
6PLEX Internal 6X Speed w/Controller	$490	$480
6PLEX Internal 6X Speed w/o Controller	445	435

MONITORS



ViewSonic
17GA Multimedia
.27mm 1280 x 1024
$825 $816

	ELP	BCP
15ES 15" .28mm	$380	$370
15GA 15" .27mm	500	490
17GS 17" .27mm	755	745
20G 20" .28mm	1260	125
21PS 21" .25mm	1750	1730
CTX		
1565D 15" 28mm	$359	$349
1765GMe 17" 27mm	655	640
1785GMe 17" .26mm	715	700
2085 20" 28mm	1125	1100
MAG		
DX15F 15" .28mm	$390	$375
DX17F 17" .26mm	695	670
MITSUBISHI ELECTRONICS		
Diamond Scan 15HX 15" .28mm	$440	$420
Diamond Scan 17HX 17" .26mm	905	860
Diamond Pro 17TX 17" .25mm	1050	1030
Diamond Pro 21TX 21" 30mm	1880	1850
NEC		
MultiSync XV15 15" 28mm	$470	$450
MultiSync XV17 17" .28mm	740	730
MultiSync XP17 17" .28mm	1050	1030
MultiSync XE21 21" .28mm	1800	1780
MultiSync XP21 21" .28mm	2170	2150
Panasonic		
PanaSync C1591E 15" .27mm	$425	$415
PanaSync C1791Ei 17" 27mm	750	740
PanaMedia 17 17" .27mm	805	790
PanaSync Pro C2192P 21" 25mm	1750	1730
SONY		
CPD-1425 14" .25mm	$300	$292
Multiscan 15sf 15" 25mm	475	465
Multiscan 17sf 17" 25mm	870	850
Multiscan 20se 20" .30mm	1920	1900

VIDEO CARDS

matrox
MGA Millenium
2MB PCI MPEG
$310 $294

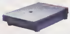
	ELP	BCP
ATI		
Graphics Xpression 1MB ISA	$140	$132
Graphics Xpression 2MB VLB	185	176
WinTurbo 2MB PCI	263	253
Graphics Pro Turbo 2MB PCI	310	298
Graphics Pro Turbo 4MB PCI	430	420
DIAMOND		
Speedstar Pro 1MB VLB DRAM	$95	$88
Stealth 64 2MB VLB VRAM	330	320
Stealth 64 4MB PCI VRAM	475	465
Stealth Video 2MB DRAM PCI	224	214
Number Nine		
9FX Vision 330 2MB PCI	$174	$166
9FX Motion 531 2MB PCI	217	207
9FX Motion 771 4MB PCI	425	415

PRINTERS

EPSON
Stylus Color II Inkjet
720 dpi color
$315 $310

	ELP	BCP
Stylus Color IIs	$315	$310
Stylus Color Pro	$755	$735
Canon		
BJC-4100 Color Inkjet	$365	$355
BJC-610 Color Inkjet	545	535
LBP-460 600DPI	380	370
LBP-1260 600DPI	1285	1265
MultiPASS 1000 Multifunction	700	685
HEWLETT PACKARD		
DeskJet 600 Inkjet	$295	$288
DeskJet 660C Color Inkjet	395	385
DeskJet 850C Color Inkjet	530	519
LaserJet 5L 600DPI	510	495
LaserJet 5P 600DPI	859	845
LaserJet 5MP 600DPI	1025	1000
LEXMARK		
Optra R+ 1200DPI	$1440	$1420
Optra Rt+ 1200DPI	1630	1600
Optra Lx+ 1200DPI	2225	2200
Optra Lxi+ 1200DPI	2920	2880
Medley 4C 300DPI Multifunction	685	670
OKIDATA		
OKIJET 2010 Color Inkjet	$365	$355
OL600e 600DPI	395	385
OL610e 600DPI	500	485
OL810e 600DPI	765	745
TEXAS INSTRUMENTS		
MicroLaser WIN/4 600DPI	$435	$414
MicroLaser 600 600DPI	830	800
MicroLaser Pro E 600DPI	1320	1300
MicroLaser Power Pro 600DPI	1600	1550

SCANNERS



HEWLETT PACKARD
ScanJet 4C Flatbed
600 dpi Color
$930 $910

	ELP	BCP
EPSON		
ES-600C Color Flatbed	$500	$490
ES-1000C Color Flatbed	725	710
ES-1200C Color Flatbed	930	915
ES-1200C Pro Color Flatbed	1100	1080
MICROTEK		
ScanMaker II Color Flatbed	$365	$355
ScanMaker IISP Color Flatbed	450	440
ScanMaker IIHR Color Flatbed	545	530
ScanMaker 35T Color Slide	675	640
ScanMaker III Color Flatbed	1930	1900
UMAX *The Magic of Color*		
Vista-T630 SOHO	$395	$385
UC1260 PCLE2	705	690
Vista-S6 PCLE2	540	530
Vista-S8 PCLE2	645	630
PowerLook PCPRO2	2000	1980

MODEMS

U.S. Robotics
Sportster 28.8
V.34 Data/Fax Ext.
$200 $192

	ELP	BCP
Sportster SI 14 4/Fax	$55	$46
Sportster 28.8 V.34 Data/Fax Internal	185	175
Sportster 28.8/Fax PCMCIA	274	264
CARDINAL		
MVP 28 8IV Int. Voice/Fax/Modem	$160	$154
MVP 28 8XV Ext. Voice/Fax/Modem	174	172
Hayes		
Accura 144B+ FAX144 Internal	$95	$89
Accura 144+ FAX144 External	110	104
Accura 288 V34/V.FC+ FAX Internal	185	176
Accura 288 V.34/V.FC+ FAX External	215	208
Practical Peripherals		
PM144HC II 14 4/Fax	$74	$70
PM144MT II 14 4/Fax	90	86
PM288HC II V 34 28 8/Fax	165	158
PM288MT II V 34 28.8/Fax	185	177
PC288 28 8/Fax PCMCIA	274	264

MASS STORAGE

WESTERN DIGITAL
Caviar
1083MB EIDE
$243 $235

	ELP	BCP
Caviar 635MB EIDE	$183	$175
Caviar 850MB EIDE	210	199
Caviar 1280MB EIDE	290	280
CONNER *The Storage Answer*		
Filepro 635MB EIDE	$190	$182
Filepro 850MB EIDE	205	198
Filepro 1275MB EIDE	264	254
Maxtor		
7850AV 850MB EIDE	$217	$209
71050A 1GB EIDE	265	255
71626AP 1.6GB EIDE	265	355
Quantum		
Fireball 1080MB EIDE	$235	$227
Fireball 1280MB EIDE	250	244
Trailblazer 850MB EIDE	199	193
Trailblazer 850MB SCSI-2	229	222
Seagate		
ST5850A 850MB EIDE	$212	$204
ST1220A 1 0GB EIDE	249	241
ST15230N 4200MB 3.5" SCSI II	1020	1000

TAPE DRIVES

	ELP	BCP
IOMEGA		
ZIP 100MB PC	$192	$182
Ditto 3200MB Internal	280	266
Ditto 3200MB External	370	360
COLORADO		
Jumbo 1400MB	$219	$211
Jumbo 350MB	123	113
Jumbo 700MB	192	182
Trakker 350MB External	223	213

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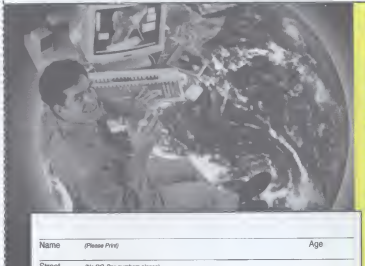

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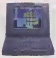

AST
950N Pentium® 75 8/500MB Dual
$2635 $2600

	ELP	BCP
950N Pentium® 75 8/800MB Dual	$2880	$2850
950N Pentium® 75 8/1200MB Dual	3280	3250
950N Pentium® 90 8/800MB Dual	3280	3250
950N Pentium® 90 8/1200MB Dual	3635	3600
950N Pentium® 75 8/1200MB Active	4240	4200
950N Pentium® 90 8/1200MB Active	4590	4550
IBM		
701CS 4/75 8/540MB Active	$3335	$3300
701C 4/75 8/540MB Active	3890	3850
755CX Pentium® 75 8/540MB Active	4690	4650
755CX Pentium® 75 8/810MB Active	5040	5000
755CD Pentium® 75 8/810MB CD Act.	5240	5200
760C Pentium® 120 8/720MB 12.1" Act.	6440	6400
760CD Pentium® 90 8/1200MB 12.1" Act.	7250	7200
NEC		
2000D 4/75 4/350MB Dual	$1905	$1880
2000C 4/75 4/350MB Active	2175	2150
2000C 4/75 8/540MB Active	2650	2630
4000D Pentium® 75 8/540MB Dual	3330	3300
4000D Pentium® 75 8/540MB/CD Dual	3640	3600
4050CD Pentium® 90 8/810MB/CD Act	4550	4500
4080H Pentium® 120 8/1000MB Active	5350	5300
Texas Instruments		
Extensa 450 DX4/75 4/340MB Dual	$1770	$1730
Extensa 550 P/75 8/524MB Dual	2430	2400
Extensa 550CD P/75 8/524MB/CD Dual	2910	2880
Extensa 550CDT P/75 8/524MB/CD Act	3490	3450
TM5100 Pentium® 90 8/1200MB Active	4650	4600
TM5200 Pentium® 120 8/1200MB Active	5050	5000
TOSHIBA		
T2110CS 4/75 4/330MB Dual	$1699	$1679
T2130CS 4/75 8/500MB Dual	1999	1979
T400CS Pentium® 75 8/810MB Dual	2999	2949
T410CS Pentium® 90 8/810MB Dual	3530	3499
T400CDT P/75® 8/810MB/CD Active	3999	3949
T410CDT P/90® 8/810MB/CD Active	4699	4650
T700CS Pentium® 120 8/1200MB Dual	4650	4600
T700CT Pentium® 120 16/1200MB Act	5750	5700

MULTIMEDIA

DIAMOND
Multimedia K
8000
$555 $540

	ELP	
Multimedia Kit 7000	$36	
CREATIVE		
Sound Blaster AWE32 PNP	$22	
Discovery CD 4X Internal	32	
Blaster CD 4X IDE Internal	18	
NEC		
6XE External 6X Speed	$56	
6XI Internal 6X Speed	45	
PLEXTOR		
6PLEX Internal 6X Speed w/Controller	$49	
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MONITORS

ViewSonic
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.27mm 1280 x 1024
$825 $816

	ELP	BCP
15ES 15" .28mm	$380	$370
15GA 15" .27mm	500	490
17GS 17" .27mm	755	745
20G 20" .28mm	1260	125
21PS 21" .25mm	1750	1730
CTX		
1565D 15" .28mm	$359	$349
1765GMe 17" .27mm	655	640
1785GMe 17" .26mm	715	700
2085 20" .28mm	1125	1100
MAG		
DX15F 15" .28mm	$390	$375
DX17F 17" .26mm	695	670
Mitsubishi Electronics		
Diamond Scan 15HX 15" .28mm	$440	$420
Diamond Scan 17HX 17" .26mm	905	860
Diamond Pro 17TX 17" .25mm	1050	1030
Diamond Pro 21TX 21" .30mm	1880	1850
NEC		
MultiSync XV15 15" .28mm	$470	$450
MultiSync XV17 17" .28mm	740	730
MultiSync XP17 17" .28mm	1050	1030
MultiSync XE21 21" .28mm	1800	1780
MultiSync XP21 21" .28mm	2170	2150
Panasonic		
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PanaSync C1791Ei 17" .27mm	750	740
PanaMedia 17 17" .27mm	805	790
PanaSync Pro C2192P 21" .25mm	1750	1730
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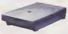

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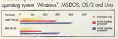

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NEW Laserjet 5MP	$1,024		

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TEAC 4X Int EIDE Kit	$211
NEW TEAC 6X, Int EIDE Kit	$258
Toshiba 4X, Int EIDE Kit	$206
NEW Toshiba 6X, SCSI Int /Ext	$344/$412
NEW Nec 6X, SCSI Int /Ext	$469/$563
NEW Plextor 6X, SCSI Int /Ext	$412/$518

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AMERICAN POWER CONVERSION

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ATI Graphics Xpression 1mb/2mb	$140/$187
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ATI Graphics Pro Turbo 2mb/4mb	$317/$446
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Diamond Stealth 64 3400XL	$493
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Number 9 9FX Vision 330 1mb/2mb	$132/$177
Number 9 9FX Motion 531 1mb/2mb	$177/$220
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Elite 2864i-s/t isdn 128kbps 2-wire leased led	$541
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Please answer questions below:

1. **Where do you use your computer?** (Check one only):
   1. ☐ Home 2. ☐ Business 3. ☐ Both
2. **What kinds of computers do you use?** (Check all that apply):
   1. ☐ IBM/Compatible Laptop 2. ☐ IBM/Compatible Desktop 3. ☐ MAC
3. **Do you plan to buy any of the hardware or software mentioned below in the next three months?** (Check all that apply):

HARDWARE
1. ☐ PC
2. ☐ MAC
3. ☐ Laptop
4. ☐ Printer
5. ☐ Monitor
6. ☐ Disk/Tape Back-up
7. ☐ Add-in Board
8. ☐ Modem
9. ☐ Input Device
10. ☐ Local Area Network
11. ☐ Windows

SOFTWARE
12. ☐ Accounting
13. ☐ Spreadsheet
14. ☐ Personal Finance
15. ☐ Desktop Publishing
16. ☐ Word Processor
17. ☐ Database Manager
18. ☐ Graphics
19. ☐ Utility
20. ☐ Communications
21. ☐ Windows/Multi-tasking
22. ☐ Programming Language/Compiler
23. ☐ Integrated/Multifunction
24. ☐ CAD
25. ☐ CD-RDM
26. ☐ Dn-Line Services

4. **From which of the following sources do you purchase personal computer products?** (Check all that apply):
   1. ☐ Specialty Computer Retail Stores 2. ☐ Mail Drder Firms 3. ☐ Direct from Manufacturers 4. ☐ Other

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24. ☐ CAD
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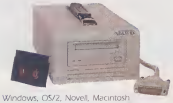

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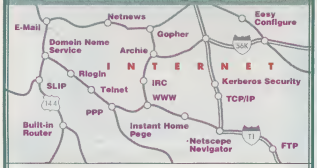

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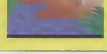

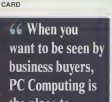

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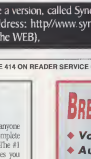

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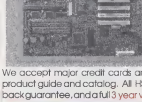

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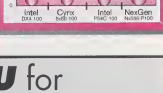

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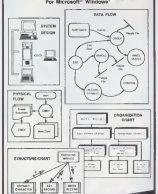

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Fax on a Shoestring In a package not much larger than a deck of cards, Hewlett-Packard's new PrinterPal (below) turns your DeskJet or LaserJet printer into a plain-paper fax machine. Daisy-chain the printer cable through the adapter; attach a power cord, phone line, and serial cable; and suddenly your ho-hum office printer is a top-notch plain-paper fax machine. PrinterPal automatically detects and routes incoming calls, so you can use the same phone line for fax and voice. It also lets you save inbound faxes to disk, so you can delete unwanted faxes without wasting paper. Best of all, it doesn't cost an arm and a leg ($199 list price for the DeskJet 500 or later model; $219 list price for the LaserJet 3 or later model; 800-752-0900). . . . **Phone Home** AT&T's Computer Telephone 8130 (above right) is a unique and trend-setting combination: a high-quality, two-line speakerphone with caller identification and a Windows program that includes a phone book, dialer, automatic-call log, and call-tracking app. You can use your PC to put a call on hold, set up a conference call, and change the volume. Considered separately, the phone and the software, while far from the best ever, uphold AT&T's reputation for solid, easy-to-use products. ($199 list price; 800-233-2650). . . . **Plug and Play Power Protection?** Believe it or not, Microsoft has awarded its Designed for Windows 95 label to an uninterruptible power supply. Why a UPS? American Power Conversion's Plug and Play Back-UPS Pro 280 is detected by Windows 95's Setup (via the UPS's parallel cable), and automatically installs APC's PowerChute Pro software. Because many more Windows users are leaving their machines running all the time—particularly to take advantage of Windows 95's System Agent and DriveSpace ultracompression—graceful shutdown in the event of an extended power outage has become increasingly important. This is one slick package. The Back-UPS Pro 280 has enough reserve power for almost any SOHO machine ($199 est. street price; 800-877-4080). **WL**

Reader Service Numbers: PrinterPal, *843*; Computer Telephone 8130, *846*; Plug and Play Back-UPS Pro 280, *847*

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Our Usability Labs staff put five MFDs through their paces: Lexmark's Medley, Xerox's Document WorkCenter 250, Brother's MFC-4500ML, Canon's MultiPass 1000, and Hewlett-Packard's OfficeJet LX. As similar as these devices are, you'll find differences, such as color printing technology, that will influence your purchasing decision.

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Harmonious Medley

Lexmark's Medley stands out from the pack for several reasons. The most notable? In a field of ink-jet technology, it's the only MFD to offer color printing (but it doesn't offer color copying).

Setting up the Medley was fairly easy, although the paper lever felt a bit flimsy. You can choose from two printing modes: all black, or color with a composite black. The Medley has a space to store the extra ink-jet cartridge. We found the output quality for both printing and copying good: It's not outstanding, but it's sufficient.

For document scanning, the Medley offers the richest feature set of the devices we tested. It lets you adjust the scan resolution, but the lack of OCR software is an oversight.

Faxing is simple. After each fax, the Medley prints a transmission report that includes a scan of the first page. One drawback: The included FaxSynergy software is incompatible with Windows 95. But Lexmark assured us that the compatibility issue would be resolved by the time we went to press.

Work-Centric WorkCenter

With the Document WorkCenter 250, Xerox lives up to its reputation for copying, adding high-quality features for scanning, faxing, and printing. This mix makes it a good choice, and our testing ranks it a close second to the Medley.

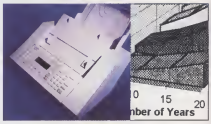
The WorkCenter's unique Quick Start Guide poster visually walks you through each step of the installation. This is what makes the WorkCenter the easiest of these five MFDs to set up.

Printing is hassle-free, but jobs are delivered last page first, so you have to manually reorder your documents.

Copying with the WorkCenter is equally easy, and the copies come close to matching the originals. But although print jobs can be collated, copy jobs can't.

Scanning with the TextBridge Pro software is also simple, and the best of the test group—preserving document layout and providing highly accurate recognition.

As for faxing, the entire job is scanned into memory before dialing, and faxing to multiple recipients proved painless. Indicator lights and a three-line LCD panel make it easy to track the WorkCenter's status.



Working Well: The WorkCenter 250 is the best monochrome MFD package, and the easiest to install.

Document WorkCenter 250 / Xerox / (800) 832-6979 / $699 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 849*

Oh, Brother!

Is output quality No. 1 on your list? Then Brother's MFC-4500ML is for you. The only laser technology available in the under-$1,000 price range, it offers faster and cleaner text output than the ink-jet contenders.

If you've set up a laser printer before, you shouldn't have a problem setting up the MFC-4500ML. But getting it

Love the Laser: Brother's MFC-4500ML is the only MFD we tested that offers high-quality, laser output.

Brother MFC-4500ML / Brother Int'l / (908) 356-8880 / $999 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 851*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERNIE FRIEDLANDER

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Macintosh: MacInTax for Business requires a 68030 processor or higher, System 7.0 or higher, 4 MB of RAM, 3.5" high density floppy drive, 23 MB of hard disk space. Supports most Apple composition laser, inkjet and dot matrix printers.

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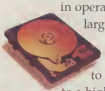
Increasing storage requirements driven by upgrades in operating systems, applications software and larger data files place mountainous demands on your hard drive's capacity. To make sure your PC has what it takes to handle the long road ahead, upgrade to a high capacity, fast Seagate Medalist 1080sl 1 gigabyte disc drive today.



The Medalist 1080sl disc drives are multimedia ready, and are fully compatible with your PC, Windows 95 and Windows NT. And whether you choose to upgrade with Seagate's Fast ATA-2 or Fast SCSI-2 interface, the Medalist 1080sl can significantly increase your system's performance at a fraction of the cost of a new PC.

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Designed for Microsoft® Windows® 95

Call 408-438-8111 and ask for a copy of our SeaLAB Report that details how upgrading to a Seagate drive can bring your PC to peak performance. Or test drive our Website at http://www.seagate.com.

Seagate

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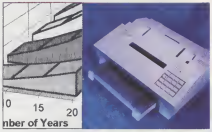
Circle 125 on reader service card.



Fire the Canon: The MultiPass 1000 offers fairly good output, but setup is not for the fainthearted.

MultiPass 1000 / Canon USA / (800) 432-1467 / $699 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 852*

to fax can be difficult: The software is incompatible with Windows 95, and it doesn't let you import other apps' fax phone books.

While faxing directly from the unit was basic enough, sending to multiple numbers proved to be a bit more complicated. We had to create a group with each fax number, program the group into a speed dialer, and then schedule the jobs. None of these steps was documented.

It's no surprise that the MFC-4500ML's copy quality mirrors its printing. The Copy and Photo buttons (for higher resolution) on the front of the unit make copying a simple task. The only thing missing? An option to collate documents.

Scanning proved to be a bit tricky with the included software. In a collection of 12 applets, two were required just to scan and view a document.

Multifaceted Multipass

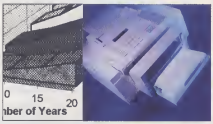
Once you hurdle the MultiPass 1000's tricky setup, it has a lot to offer. But Canon's MFD is not for the fainthearted, as it's plagued by usability shortcomings.

We attribute the difficulties to an unintuitive control panel and inadequate documentation.

After we realized that the MultiPass 1000 is incompatible with Windows 95 (Canon promised compatibility by November 1995), putting it to use was fairly easy. It's an ink-jet device that produces good printing and copying.

The included scanning software is easy to navigate, but the scan quality was disappointing.

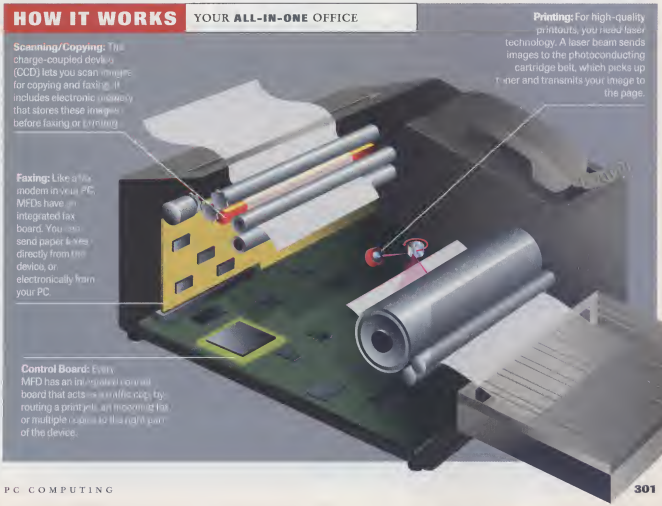
As with Brother's MFC-4500ML, we encountered problems faxing to multiple



Ink Jet in Your Office: Faxing with HP's OfficeJet LX is a breeze, but printing and scanning are not up to par.

OfficeJet LX / Hewlett-Packard / (800) 474-6838 / $689 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 853*

HOW IT WORKS YOUR ALL-IN-ONE OFFICE



The Software Equation

	Brother MFC-4500ML	Canon MultiPass 1000	HP OfficeJet LX	Lexmark Medley	Xerox WorkCenter 250
Fax Software	Missing Link	MultiPass Desktop Manager	Eclipse Fax SE	FaxSynergy	Delrina's WinFax Lite
OCR Software	Missing Link	MultiPass Desktop Manager	Eclipse Fax SE	None	TextBridge Pro

recipients. Again, the documentation was of little or no help. But once we figured out everything on our own, the rest was smooth sailing.

Fax with OfficeJet Ease

Despite HP's leading efforts in the MFD market, its second-generation offering—the OfficeJet LX—leaves much to be desired. Installation is clearly documented and painless, but copying and scanning aren't quite on par.

It offers clean, but rather basic, ink-jet printing. As for copying, it had trouble taking our test magazine and newspaper pages without crunching the edges.

The OfficeJet's Eclipse Fax SE software for both scanning and faxing is easy to use, but it doesn't let you adjust the scan resolution, and scan results were less than desirable. Faxing is no problem.

Multifunction Verdict

Two products excel: Lexmark's Medley for its color printing, and Brother's MFC-4500ML for its laser-quality output. The Medley is easy to use, especially for faxing.

All five devices have feed trays that handle up to 20 pages, and paper trays that hold at least 100 pages. Each lets you print on a variety of paper sizes and media, from envelopes to transparencies. Scanning resolution is at least 300 dots per inch.

For monochrome ink-jet MFDs, Xerox's WorkCenter 250 offers the best package overall, including top-of-the-line copy features and bundled software. **KKC and RS**

Contributors to Soho: KYLA K. CARLSON, WOODY LEONHARD, *and* RICH SCHWERIN. *Edited by* KIM AUSTIN.

DECISION MAKER

WHICH **MFD** IS FOR YOU?

Lab notes

To evaluate multifunction devices, *PC Computing*'s Usability Labs staff spent two weeks examining each product's features. We evaluated the basics, including printing, faxing, copying, and scanning. We also inspected the machines' more advanced features, such as copy collation, fax scheduling, and the simultaneous operation of two functions.

We tested faxing to a single fax number and to multiple fax numbers, and we looked at the options for scheduling faxes to be sent during off-peak hours.

To assess the simultaneous-operation function, we tested printing and faxing together, as well as scanning and printing, copying and printing, and scanning and copying. We also imported information from external applications, such as personal information managers and databases, into the included fax software.

In addition, we evaluated any possible compromises a user would have to make when using an MFD compared with using five stand-alone devices (printer, fax machine, copier, scanner, and fax modem).

TempoNote DX4/100

- DX4/100 processor
- 4MB RAM, expandable to 20MB
- 340MB removable HDD, expandable to 810MB
- 10.4" Color DSTN display
- Full PCMCIA card support (Two Type II or One Type III)
- Built-in digital sound chip, speaker, microphone
- Up to 4 hours battery life
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- Optional docking station provides four drive bays and three slots
- Windows 95 (or MS-DOS/MS-Windows 3.11)
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- Light weight: 6lb
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Quicken for 96 / Intuit / (800) 624-8742 or http://www.intuit.com / $39 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 633*

Get on the Highway

Frontier Technologies' SuperHighway Access 2.0 integrates all the tools you need to get online, including tutorials and a Web browser.

SuperHighway Access 2.0 / Frontier Technologies / (800) 929-3054 or http://www.frontiertech.com / $89 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 634*

32-Bit Surfing

Mosaic in a Box for Windows 95 from CompuServe and Spry has everything you need to search the Web from your Windows 95 desktop, including a fast-start wizard, drag-and-drop e-mail, and right-mouse-button features.

Mosaic in a Box for Windows 95 / CompuServe/Spry / (800) 777-9638 or http://www.spry.com/ / $10 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 635*

PROTOCOL WARS

Internet Insecurities

Until consumers feel as comfortable using their credit cards online as they do over the telephone, Web commerce will languish rather than flourish.

Safe I-Way commerce won't be possible until security standards are in place. The problem is that different vendors have lined up behind different proposed measures, each fighting to lead the way. Last April, many warring factions, including America Online, CompuServe, EIT, IBM, Netscape, Prodigy, and RSA, called a truce to develop a universal standard. But nearly a year later, no common standard has been set.

In the meantime, Microsoft and Visa are working together on two proposed security standards. The first, Secure Transaction Technology (STT), was designed for online retail sales. STT competes with Secure Electronic Payment Protocol (SEPP), which is backed by MasterCard, IBM, Netscape, GTE, and CyberCash. STT and SEPP are based on similar encryption technologies, but have different message formats. In addition, SEPP is a hardware-based security device, while STT is used in software.

The other proposed standard from Microsoft and Visa is Private Communication Technology (PCT), which encompasses both authentication and encryption. Authentication verifies the identity of each party; encryption scrambles the message so that unauthorized parties can't read it. Unlike STT, PCT will work with the Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) technology developed by Netscape. Last year, a number of graduate students managed to hack SSL, but Netscape has since patched the problems.

Net Protection: Until ongoing security-standards battles are resolved, trustworthy I-Way commerce is a pipe dream.

As vendors continue to wage standards battles, it's perfectly reasonable for consumers to be cautious about making online purchases. And until the market settles on a trustworthy security standard, online commerce won't reach its potential.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY PETER ALAN GOULD. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SICKLES PHOTO-REPORTING

ONE-MINUTE GUIDE — Heavy Hitters: Track Your Web Site's Circulation

Maintaining a Web server and your company's home page is no easy task. The job would be much simpler if you knew who was hitting your site and how often. These tools help you track Web circulation.

INTERSÉ MARKET FOCUS Use Intersé Market Focus, a $695 Web site traffic-analysis tool, to identify visitors and their organizations, and to document users' browsers and favorite Web activities (http://www.interse.com).

NETCOUNT Used primarily by advertisers, NetCount is a customizable reporting service that uses Sybase and Silicon Graphics technologies to report traffic information by site, subject, page, and time spent (http://www.netcount.com).

I/PRO Internet Profiles and giant media-auditor Nielsen Media Research developed I/Pro, a subscription-based site-traffic tool. I/Pro also offers lengthy reports on your site (http://www.irpo.com).

PERSONAL WEB SITE W3.Com's Personal Web Site is a Unix-based Web utility that identifies the surfing habits of site visitors by tracking site registration (http://w3.com).

AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATION For $100 a month, the Audit Bureau of Circulation monitors site traffic, documents users' browsing patterns, and determines common pathways to your site (http://www.webtrack.com).

Free Stuff!

Dylan Tweney: Hit Our Web Site for Tons of Free Downloads

Cruise the Web in 3-D ****
Caligari's Fountain lets you create and browse 3-D VRML sites on the Web.
File: FOUNT.ZIP **Size/Time*:** 2.2MB/55 minutes

Windows 95 Control Panel Utility for Control Freaks ***
Use WinHacker 95 to set dozens of undocumented Windows 95 options with ease.
File: WINHAK.ZIP **Size/Time*:** 20K/1 minute

Robot Wars: Playing Games on Your PC *****
Mech Warrior pits massive, armed robots against each other in battles to the death.
File: MECWAR.ZIP **Size/Time*:** 4.9MB/2 hours

File Viewing As Easy As Click and Drag ****
Click on a file and drag it to the Drag and View icon—it's quicker than Quick View.
File: DRAGVW.ZIP **Size/Time*:** 528K/9 minutes

Windows 95 Enhancement Utilities: Toying with Power *****
Make Windows 95 work the way you do with Power Toys' Windows 95 enhancement utilities.
File: POWTOY.ZIP **Size/Time*:** 84K/1 minute

Quick DOS Delete Utility for Windows 95 ***
With RDel, DOS's delete command sends files to Windows 95's Recycle Bin in a flash.
File: DOSDEL.ZIP **Size/Time*:** 11K/1 minute

Easy Sound-File Editing *****
Cool Edit is a comprehensive sound-file editor for Windows and includes an eclectic set of special effects.
File: COLEDT.ZIP **Size/Time*:** 696K/10 minutes

Delrina's Complete Internet Toolbox *****
Cyberjack is Delrina's powerful suite of Internet tools—check out the handy guidebook on surfing.
File: CYBJCK.ZIP **Size/Time*:** 5.1MB/2 hours

Connect with Communications Software ****
Telix for Windows is a powerful $45 shareware communications program.
File: TELIX.ZIP **Size/Time*:** 2.5MB/90 minutes

Your Complete One-Stop Surf Shop *****
Online links mentioned in I-Way Patrol and throughout *PC Computing* can be accessed from our Web site at http://www.zdnet.com/~pccomp.

*ALL FILES ARE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD FROM *PC COMPUTING*'S WEB EDITION AT HTTP://WWW.ZDNET.COM/~PCCOMP. FILE SIZES QUOTED ARE THE BYTES IN THE ZIP FILE. DOWNLOAD TIMES ARE CITED AT 14.4KBPS. SEE PAGE 20 FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION ON OUR ONLINE SERVICES.

Package Deals: Useful Software Wrapped and Ready

IMMUNE SYSTEM
You can never be too safe when it comes to computer viruses. Get first-class protection with this collection of antivirus utilities from McAfee, Symantec, and Dr. Solomon.
File: SYMNAV.ZIP
Size/Time*: 562K/12 minutes
****

TIME ON YOUR HANDS
Your PC becomes a time-management tool when you install this suite of utilities. It includes a talking clock and a program that synchronizes your PC's ticker with various atomic clocks.
File: CLOCKS.ZIP
Size/Time*: 381K/8 minutes
****

WINDOW DRESSING
What's the point of having a desktop if you can't customize it? With these Windows 95 enhancements you can add animated cursors, replace the start-up logo, or space out with a psychedelic screen saver.
File: WINCUS.ZIP
Size/Time*: 437K/11 minutes
*****

*Ratings: ***** Your own basement workshop. **** A shiny new table saw. *** A cordless drill. ** An old handsaw. * Handy Andy's toy toolbox.*

Insites

GET SERIAL *Spike Webb, Net Detective* is the first serial fiction on the Web.
http://www.spikewebb.com

SEARCHIN' SAQQARA Step Search from Saqqara is a searching technology for online catalogs. Link Step Search to your online databases so customers can browse through your products.
http://www.saqqara.com

JUST YOUR IMAGINATION AT&T's ImagiNation Network's home page has links to dozens of interactive online games.
http://www.inngames.com

DAILY DOSE OF COOL From the U.S. National Debt Clock to the Holy Hat Person Page—cool or not—it's here.
http://cool.infi.net/

INTEL'S I-WAY SOLUTIONS Intel's Internet Resource Directory is packed with links to more than 350 Internet-related companies.
http://www.intel.com/iaweb/director/

CAFE DE IDEAS The Idea Cafe is a gathering place where you'll find tips and tidbits from small-business owners and entrepreneurs.
http://www.IdeaCafe.com/

SEGA SURFING Scan the best in online gaming and 3-D chat worlds at Sega Online.
http://www.segaoa.com

DIGITAL DENIM Button your fly and check out Levi Strauss's site. Departments include Inner Seam, where you'll find advertising info, and Hanger, which contains FAQs about jeans.
http://www.levi.com

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It's 2 o'clock.

Do You Know What Your Kids Are Doing On Your PC?

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Give Kids Access to Their Software...Not Yours.

There's Even A Safe Haven For Mom and Dad!

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KidSecure is just $29.95!

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ATF

CD-RONWhite

Virtual Art

It's true, I like coffee-table books. And why shouldn't image catalogs exist on CDs, too? This month's CDs give you an eyeful, but some escape coffee-table status by offering more than mere collections of pretty pictures. They provide insights into the artist, the period, and the medium. But even the least informative ones are still good enough to put a coffee cup on.

Eye-Openers: Walk With Open Eyes through the Art Institute of Chicago.

WITH OPEN EYES ●●●●

This is a wonderful CD about a great collection of art from the Art Institute of Chicago. A cartoonlike interface lets you roam from painting to painting, get detailed information, zoom in for close-ups and closer-ups, create your own collection of favorites, and place the artworks in a time line or on a globe. Two features are unique: One shows you the size of a painting by placing it in a gallery with people standing nearby for comparison; the other turns the works into games, which are surprisingly interesting. There is only one problem—you have little control over what works you view, since there's no list of titles or artists to choose from. Otherwise, this CD is a pleasant evening's stroll through a great art museum.

With Open Eyes / The Voyager Company / (800) 446-2001, (212) 431-5199 / $40 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 803*

ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE: AN OVERVIEW ●●●● ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE: THE CONTROVERSY ●●●●

If you doubt that Robert Mapplethorpe was an important artist, look at either of these CDs. Although the tone of the narration is a bit too hushed, there's no denying the beauty and power of Mapplethorpe's photographs, whether it's a close-up of a lily or a naked body. The Overview CD is intended for general audiences, and its 400-plus images exclude the sexually explicit photos that created a heated stir over the role of government support for the arts in the late '80s. The Controversy CD, naturally, contains the disputed photographs among its more than 700 images. So now you can be the judge. Both of the Windows disks have a multimedia documentary on the artist and thumbnail views of each of his photos, with databases of related information on each. Few modern artists warrant this extensive treatment, and few CDs do it so well.

Beauties and Nudies: Choose from the PG- or R-rated Mapplethorpe CDs

Robert Mapplethorpe: An Overview; Robert Mapplethorpe: The Controversy Digital Collections / (800) 449-6220, (510) 814-7200 / Overview, $60 est. street price; Controversy, $90 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 804*

AMERICAN VISIONS JOURNEYS THROUGH ART: ACT ONE ●●●

The masterpieces in this Windows and Macintosh CD come from the collection of Roy R. Neuberger, who devoted his life to buying works from living American artists. The selections—200 works from 129 artists—are exciting examples of modern art. The CD puts the work in the context of current events and art movements. But the interface is awkward. It forces you to scroll through screen after screen of thumbnails representing art, artists, themes, and videos (such as one of Jackson Pollock at work), until you find what you're looking for. This CD badly needs a search function.

American Visions Journeys Through Art: Act One / Creative Labs / (800) 998-5227, (408) 428-6600 / $40 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 805*

GREAT ARTISTS ●●●

There is great breadth in this collection of art from the National Gallery in London, but little depth. Each piece of art gets only a few lines of description. Jan van Eyck's *Arnolfini Marriage* is cited as an example of gesture, but the commentary ignores the most famous aspect of the painting—a reflection of van Eyck in a mirror behind the newlyweds. What this CD says is very

●●●●● *Undiscovered Rembrandt.* ●●●● *Discovered Picasso.* ●●● *Grateful Dead poster.* ●● *Paint-by-numbers.* ● *Matador on black velvet.*

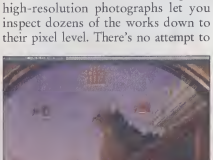
PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES McGOON

good, but it says too little. And the hypertext links for such words as *pointillism* do not add any extra historical or artistic information. The best aspect of the CD is how it lets you explore themes, techniques, and materials by experimenting with valuables like the color balance of a painting.

Great Artists / Attica Cybernetics and Marshall Cavendish / (800) 721-2475, (818) 882-9184 / $42 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 806*

THE FRICK COLLECTION ●●●●

This is a great collection not simply because its contents are exquisite—240 works from the Frick Collection in New York City—but also because it gives you stunning, sharp close-ups. Even the enlargements retain their accurate color and detail. Special high-resolution photographs let you inspect dozens of the works down to their pixel level. There's no attempt to



Real Close-Ups: You can zoom in on 240 works from the Frick Collection.

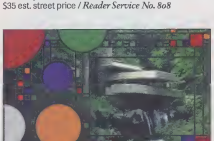
disguise the underpinnings of the collection's database structure. The result is a no-nonsense way to perform complex searches. But lacking the pretty package that envelopes most art CDs, this disc is more for art scholars than art browsers.

Great Paintings Renaissance to Impressionism: The Frick Collection / Digital Collections / (800) 449-6220, (510) 814-7200 / $60 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 807*

TATE GALLERY ●●●

Here's an interesting collection of art ranging from constructivism to British sculpture through the '70s. You roam galleries devoted to Picasso, pop culture, and other modern artists and themes, or you can take a guided tour. The narration is right on target but entirely too brief. You can also choose works to add to your "private collection," but the process is awkward.

Tate Gallery—Exploring Modern Art / Attica Cybernetics / (800) 721-2475, (818) 882-9184 / $35 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 808*



Building a Legend: Play with models of Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture.

THE ULTIMATE FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT ●●●●

I'll be straight with you: I don't care for Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture. Keep that in mind when I tell you how impressed I am with this CD. It is a serious but playful exploration of the architect, his ideas, and his designs. Walking tours take you through 3-D renderings of three of his buildings. Moveable blocks let you experiment with Wright's modular concepts, and then create a 3-D vision of your design. There's a wealth of information and interesting ideas to fascinate even Wright's severest critics.

The Ultimate Frank Lloyd Wright: America's Architect / Microsoft / (800) 426-9400, (206) 882-8080 / $35 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 809*

QUICKXPENSE CD-ROM EDITION ●●●●●

You have something in common with millions of workers at thousands of companies across the country: You have to fill out and submit expense reports—and you hate it. QuickXpense, a finalist in *PC Computing*'s 1995 MVP Awards, now offers a CD-ROM version that includes dozens of custom expense forms. And even after all that, there was room left on the CD to include a program called Air Travel Manager, and a mapping program called City Streets. If you have to file expense reports, do yourself a favor and buy this CD now.

QuickXpense CD-ROM Edition / Portable Software / (800) 478-7411, (206) 637-8808 / $80 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 810*

MAGIC CARPET ●●●●●

This CD contains the same 3-D technology that wows them in Microsoft's Fury 3 and Terminal Reality's Terminal Velocity, except the fighting plane is a flying carpet. You're throwing spells instead of laser beams, and the evil enemy is a giant caterpillar. The recently released version two is a little easier to master and speeds up the action a bit. Great fun in a DOS game, and you can download a shareware episode from PC Contact (see page 20).

Magic Carpet / Electronic Arts / (800) 245-4525, (415) 571-7171 / $50 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 811*

MAABUS ●●●●

Doom fans won't want to miss this combination of fighting and adventure on CD. You pilot a rover that's investigating reports of strange radiation and mutated life on a remote island. The interface is divided between enough computer tools to delight a wirehead, and a video screen that shows the island in gorgeous, 3-D animations packed into three Windows CDs. But be careful—you don't get a second chance in this game.

Maabus / Microforum / (800) 465-2323, (416) 656-6406 / $37 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 812*

PITFALL: THE MAYAN ADVENTURE ●●●

Here's one for kids and computer nostalgia buffs. Remember that Pitfall game you used to play on your Atari 2600? You controlled a character as it faced jungle animals, quicksand, and other dangers. Well, it's been reincarnated as a Windows 95 game. It has a lot more detail and sound, but the play is much the same—heavy on timing those jumps. Happy swinging on those ropes, too.

Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure / Activision / (800) 477-3650, (310) 473-9200 / $50 est. street price / *Reader Service No. 813*

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HotList

Bookmarks of the Rich and Famous

Cha-ching. This month our spies infiltrated the penthouse at Trump Towers. They bribed Ivana, tempted Leona, and bought out Marla to expose the ultraexclusive bookmark list of real estate magnate Donald Trump. Check out his mastermind schemes here and online (http://www.zdnet.com/~pccomp/).

Rich Man
Surf the Shore: Guide to Atlantic City
http://www.nj.com:80/shore/

Poor Man
InterNet Bankruptcy Library
http://bankrupt.com/

Rich Man Again!
Web Cam Live from the 77th Floor of the Empire State Building
http://www.realtech.com/webcam/

Dining Possibilities with Ex
Welcome to Pizza Hut
http://www.pizzahut.com/

Airline Alternatives
Yahoo's Transportation Listing
http://www.yahoo.com/Business_and_Economy/Transportation/

Trump Card
OKBridge: Play Bridge on the Web
http://www.okbridge.com/
Play Hearts on the Net
http://www.outland.com/Outland/Hearts.html
Euchre
ftp://ftp.cdrchive.com/FTP_server/pub/wm_util/07/EUCH11.ZIP

Tenant Reference Check
Michael Jackson International Fan Club
http://fred.net/mj/

Shopping List
Realty-Net
http://www.realtyworld.com/index.html
NYC Real Estate Online
http://www.nyrealty.com/

Baubles for Marla
The Diamond Shopping Network
http://www.ns.net/diamond/index.html

It's for a Friend, I Swear
Hair Club for Men
http://www.hcfm.com/

Keep World-Domination Skills Sharp
Maxis SimCity 2000
http://www.maxis.com/2000des.html

Favorite Television Shows
Let's Make a Deal
http://silver.ucs.indiana.edu/~wlambert/LMaD.html
Shop 'til You Drop
http://silver.ucs.indiana.edu/~wlambert/shopdrop.html
Sale of the Century
http://silver.ucs.indiana.edu/~wlambert/SoC.html
The Price Is Right
http://silver.ucs.indiana.edu/~wlambert/TPIR_FAQ.html

Favorite Movies
The Color of Money (1986)
http://www.mystate.edu/M/title-exact?BEBA1
Wall Street (1987)
http://www.mystate.edu/M/title-exact?349844
Greedy (1994)
http://www.mystate.edu/M/title-exact?1SD570
Home Alone 2: Lost in New York (1992)
http://www.mystate.edu/M/title-exact?180F99

Favorite Musician
Taj Mahal
http://www.rootsworld.com/folklore/tajmahal.html

When Money Meant Something
Looking Back in Anger: The '80s
http://www.xrnet.com/Bivottman/wetlings/fbia.html

Checking on the Cohort's Cash Flow
Currency Exchange Rates
http://www.sna.lth.se/egi-bin/kurt/rates

Taxing Times, Indeed
Taxing Times 1995
http://www.scabet.com/tax/tax.html

Personalized News Service
Gaming and Gambling
http://www.acy.digex.net:80/~acp/games.html

I Owe, I Owe, So off to Invest I Go
Internal Revenue Service Home Page
http://www.ustreas.gov/treasury/bureaus/irs/irs.html

My Motto
The Virtue of Selfish Investing
http://www.value.net/~vsi/

Fatherhood '90s Style
The Fathers Foundation
http://www.intrnet.net/~risacs/index.html

How to Not Lose $20 Million
Family Law Advisor
http://www.divorcenet.com/law/fla.html
Prenuptial Agreement Report
http://www.baledon.com/fam_955_prenuptial.html

Christmas Wish List
The White House
http://www.whitehouse.gov/

Takes a Fortune to Get One Ticking
Tai Hong Hung Rolex Retailers
http://www.singnet.com.sg/~teenw/rolex.htm

My Daily Worth
New York Stock Exchange Newsgroup (look up DJI)
news.clari.biz.market.report.usa.nyse

Funny
Top Ten Things On Trump Card at the Trump Wedding
http://bingen.cs.csbsju.edu:80/letterman/topten/dec93.html#dec21

Funnier
Profit Graph of Ivana's Newly Acquired Home Shopping Network
http://www.ai.mit.edu:80/stocks/gif450N.html

At Least I Can Dress
Bill Gates Home Page
http://www.zyzzy.com/billg/

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